

Case of dancing bear raises questions

A growing animal rights and environmental awareness in India

NEW DELHI, June 17, (UPI): Nasser Khan, a 70-year-old animal trainer, squatted beside his mudbrick home and bitterly recalled the day environmental authorities confiscated Munna the dancing bear.

Khan was about to begin a sidewalk show in front of a movie theater and Munna was ready to entertain — playing the guitar, smoking cigarettes and disco dancing. Then the authorities showed up, accused Khan of mistreating the bear and took Munna to the zoo.

"Without giving me any notice, they snatched my bear," Khan said. "I asked them: 'Don't take away my bear. This is my livelihood. This is my family's source of income. My whole family depends on this bear.'"

Khan, a slender man with a lined face and a gray handlebar mustache, ran afoul of a growing animal rights and environmental awareness in India whose

leading proponent is Maneka Gandhi, the minister of state for the environment.

Maneka is the renegade daughter-in-law and sister-in-law, respectively, of former Prime Ministers Indira and Rajiv Gandhi. Estranged from the family and its traditional power base in the Congress (I) Party, she bolted and accepted a job with the new National Front Government.

Since being named to the cabinet-level post last fall, Maneka has been a tireless advocate for the environment, calling for protection of wildlife and pressing for economic growth that will preserve the nation's natural resources.

She has paid special attention to the treatment of animals, pushing for improved care of wildlife at the New Delhi zoo and urging the humane society to remain open 24 hours a day because of the number of animals

injured by cars at night.

During a recent visit to an animal shelter run by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty To Animals, she stopped to look at a cow that had been hit by a car while wandering down a busy city street — a common sight in the capital.

The Times of India, which reported on the visit, said one of the officials noticed Maneka looking at the cow and remarked, "too many stray animals on the road."

"No, no," she replied. "Too much traffic."

Such remarks, while perhaps intended to force people to think differently about the environment, have earned Maneka a reputation for being cold and indifferent to the needs of her countrymen, who suffer from widespread poverty and unemployment.

And people like Nasser Khan, who lives in a slum of ramshackle

huts crisscrossed by open sewers, wonder why an environmental crusade has to include a pet bear that provides an income for a large family.

"We don't know why they took Munna. We don't know if they are planning to save wildlife. We can't tell you anything about that," Khan said. "For us this is a question of bread and butter. This has been our business for generations. We don't have anything else but our bear."

But for officials who deal with the nation's wildlife, the issues are clear. Munna is a sloth bear, an endangered species protected by law. Most likely, they say, he was illegally taken from the wild.

There are only about 500 sloth bears left in the wild in India, living in jungles and feeding on ants, roots and fruits. Fully grown, they can reach a height of about 5-1/2 feet (1.7 m) standing on their hind legs and can weigh up to 400 pounds (180 kg).

The confiscation of Munna May 1 sparked a controversy in India, where thousands of snake charmers and other street artists scratch out a living by training animals, birds and reptiles to perform for tourists.

Many street artists with trained bears fled the city after Munna's arrest, while others with bears, monkeys, snakes and birds stayed behind and staged protests in front of Parliament. Khan filed a case in the country's high court seeking the bear's return.

But environmental authorities say the bear should not be returned because it has been mistreated. A zoo official said when Munna arrived, his claws had been cut and he had a cataract that left him blind in one eye.

"This poor fellow can't eat," added the official, who asked not to be identified.



An Ohio Army national guardsman looks into wreckage of a car for victims of Thursday's flash flooding in Shadyside Ohio. (Reuters wirephoto)

Ohio floods toll 15

34 still missing

SHADYSIDE, Ohio, June 17, (AP): Searchers recovered the bodies of four people yesterday, bringing to 15 the confirmed death toll from a flash flood, authorities said. About three dozen people remained missing.

Among the dead was a 5-year-old girl, whose body was found in McMahon creek early yesterday, said Chuck Vogt, Belmont county coroner's investigator. The girl and her six-year-old brother were killed when Thursday night's flood swept their mobile home from its concrete mooring.

Capt Jim Boling of the Ohio air national guard said the number of people missing was revised yesterday evening to 34. Previous reports from Belmont county authorities had given the number as 51.

Ohio emergency management agency spokesman Ned Martin said some of those listed as missing had informed relatives or authorities they were safe. Boling said others found dead may never have been

listed as missing.

In all, some 700 rescue workers — including 341 members of the Ohio national guard — are assisting flood victims.

Utility crews and local volunteers using chain saws, axes and shovels cleared the debris of more than 100 homes. A wall of water that washed over the banks of three creeks had destroyed the homes.

Gov. Richard Celeste, who toured the area for the second time yesterday, said he was shocked at the destruction.

"The damage was extraordinary. It was something that was beyond what I've seen from tornadoes and floods," he said.

Trucks hauled away stacks of flattened cars found in a gully south of the town. State highway patrol troopers and national guardsmen used dogs to sniff through the rubble and along the banks of the wege and pipe creeks in Belmont county, looking for survivors or bodies.

RAF fugitives exposed

Fall of Iron Curtain leads to swoops

EAST BERLIN, June 17, (Reuters): No one knew it at the time, but a perfect cover for fugitive West German urban guerrillas was blown when the Iron Curtain dividing the two Germanys parted seven months ago.

Former commandos of the Red Army Faction (RAF) who vanished without a trace after guerrilla raids as long ago as 1975 are now being arrested in East Germany with the regularity of police swoops on known soccer hooligans.

Six suspected RAF fugitives were captured in the past 10 days as a result of blooming inter-German police co-operation as the two Ger-

manys pursue political and economic unification.

But it also exposed the unholy role of East Germany's formerly airtight border and the communist security colossus behind it in providing refuge to West German desperados who could not find a place in the West to hide.

"We are horrified to find such diabolical collaboration," said East German Interior Minister Peter-Michael Diestel, a conservative in the governing coalition freely elected after Stalinist rule collapsed in late 1989.

The RAF, which originated in radical student circles, went on a rampage of killings, bombings, kidnappings and bank robberies aimed against "the military-industrial complex" and the political establishment in the 1970s.

Most of the group's hard core had been killed or jailed by the early 1980s, but the trail of some notorious suspects ran mysteriously cold and a new crop of guerrillas resumed attacks, although at a much reduced level.

East Germany's Stalinist rulers were ready to help because, while disagreeing with the RAF's bloodthirsty tactics, they sympathized with its "anti-imperialist" crusade, according to West German security officials.

The RAF suspects just arrested entered East Germany as long ago as 1980. They were given false names, flats and even jobs by Stassi security police.

Once behind East Germany's fortified and sealed border with West Germany, they were safe from arrest because East Berlin refused any legal co-operation with Bonn.

Despite modern police technology, Germans are keeping alive one of the oldest police methods used to track down criminals — wanted posters.

The pictures of long-sought leftist terrorists have long been displayed prominently in West German public buildings, offering 50,000 marks (about \$30,000) for information leading to their arrests.



British troops confront Napoleon in his last stand at a replay of the Battle of Waterloo. (Reuters wirephoto)

'Waterloo' restaged

2,300 march in 19th century uniforms

BRUSSELS, June 17, (AP): Some 2,300 people in 19th century military uniforms marched and rode horses over grassy knolls today to reenact Napoleon's last stand, the 1815 battle of Waterloo.

The battle was reconstructed on the site where Napoleon's "Grande Armee" of 70,000 suffered its final defeat by more than 100,000 British, Dutch, Belgian, German and Prussian troops allied under the Duke of Wellington.

At least 80,000 spectators lined the battlefield and sat on the "Butte du Lion," a 45-metre (148-foot) mound topped by a lion overlooking the farmlands near Waterloo, today a Brussels suburb, where Napoleon lost his empire 175 years ago in June 18, 1815.

Abolish KGB demand

MOSCOW, June 17, (AP): A self-described former KGB intelligence chief complained yesterday that the agency — still feared despite Soviet reforms — has too much power and should be disbanded.

Until now, no former KGB official in the Soviet Union has publicly proposed the dismantling of the agency. As a rule, KGB officials who break with the agency flee abroad or disappear.

"The KGB has too much political power, and this way will remain a threat to democracy because it may be manipulated," said Oleg D. Kalugin, who identified himself as a one-time major-general in charge of foreign counter-intelligence.

His claim could not be independently verified, although he displayed what he said was his KGB credentials. He said he was drummed out of the KGB this spring, but did not say why.

"I would abolish the KGB as such," said Kalugin, 55, who spoke with reporters after a speech to a political reform group called the Democratic Platform.

The urbane, well-dressed Kalugin, who said he spent 12 years as an operative in the United States, said the KGB supports Gorbachev.

But the former official warned that criticism of the Soviet president is increasing and that KGB chief Vladimir A. Kryuchkov "will turn with the tide."

Among the spectators was the current — and eighth — Duke of Wellington, Lord Arthur Valerian Wellesley.

The spectators watched as soldiers with muskets and sabres clashed, and listened to the sound of cannon fire, fifes, drums and bagpipes.

The festivities began yesterday with a light-and-sound show and fireworks at the mammoth Butte du Lion.

After his first defeat in 1814, Napoleon went to the Mediterranean island of Elba. He returned to mainland France on March 20, 1815, rounded up an army and set out to fight the allies in Belgium and regain his empire.

Unlike today's 90-minute event, the real battle took a full day. Napoleon almost won, but at the last minute Marshal Gebhard Blucher's Prussian troops arrived and turned the tide for the allies.

Estimates of the dead at Waterloo range from 12,000 to 50,000 plus 10,000 horses. The injured numbered 40,000, many of whom were robbed by local townsfolk and rifled that followed armies around Europe in those days.

Napoleon was shipped to the South Atlantic island of St Helena where he died and was buried in 1821. Years later, his body was returned to Paris.

The Waterloo battlefield, an area of 2.5 by 5 kilometers (1.6 by 3 miles) was named a historic site in 1914, and so cannot be developed.

Bangla strike against taxes

DHAKA, June 17, (AP): Tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets throughout Bangladesh today in an opposition-sponsored general strike opposing new taxes and calling for the resignation of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad.

Schools, businesses, buses and boats were shut down in at least 21 major cities, including the capital, Dhaka, a city of 6 million. Those few who did work had to walk to their jobs in a steady drizzle.

More than 50 people were detained nationwide but authorities said they were released after the strike ended at 2 pm (0800 GMT).

Witnesses said one group of demonstrators threw stones at a state-run bus and then clashed with police in Dhaka but there were no reports of injuries. Police were seen taking away one man.

Government offices and banks were open but did little business.

In Dhaka, thousands of marchers shouted "down with Ershad" and "tear up the budget" as riot police patrolled nearby.

Sheikh Hasina, leader of an alliance of eight parties that called the strike, said the action was a success.

"Ershad has no right to stay in power. People have rejected the fresh taxes proposed by his government," she said.

The strike focused on the country's new budget, especially the new taxes, which were announced Thursday in parliament by Finance Minister Abdul Munim.

Munim, a former army general, said the new taxes were essential to raise domestic funds for the country's \$1.7 billion development programme. He said the rest of the money would come from donor nations.

But the opposition labelled the budget as "anti-people" and demanded the government resign and order fresh elections under a neutral caretaker government.

The opposition accuses Ershad, a former army general, of rigging presidential and parliamentary elections to retain power.

Kashmir

(Continued from Page 1)

injured two other people, witnesses and family members said.

The attack by the suspected militants marked the first time four members from one extended Hindu family have been killed since the latest episode in the campaign for an independent Kashmir began about six months ago.

Witnesses said five Kashmiri youths, totting pistols, came to the house of the Gunji-Koun clan in central Srinagar this afternoon. One wore a scarf over his face; the others did not.

They knocked on the door and then burst in, firing as they entered the mud-walled house, typical of the dwellings in the centre of this scenic city.

Jawharial Gunji, 55, was the first to be killed as he approached the intruders, according to his 24-year-old son, Pamosh, who witnessed his father's death.

The elder Gunji's cousin, Badrinath Koun, 58, and his wife, Durga, 55, were also killed by bullets. Gunji's wife, Pranaji, 50, was also shot and later died while undergoing surgery, doctors said.

Two other family members, a 25-year-old woman and a 29-year-old man, were wounded in the attack, witnesses said. In all, 15 family members were present in the house at the time of the attack.

Police, meanwhile, said they recovered the bodies of two people apparently killed during the night.

One of the victims, a Hindu shopkeeper identified as Anur Krishna, had been shot, police said. His body was discovered in Shopian, about 40 miles south of Srinagar.

The other, identified as Ali Mohammad Khandey, was found hanging from a tree in Beertiah, about 15 miles west of Srinagar, police said.

A 17-man Pakistani parliamentary delegation visiting Saudi Arabia is seeking to muster support against India over disputed Kashmir, the delegation leader said in Jeddah today.

"We're seeking political, moral and diplomatic support for the people of Kashmir in their struggle for self-determination," delegation leader Qazi Hussain Ahmad told the Associated Press.

"We do not want war with India over Kashmir or any other issue, but we'll fight back if war is thrust upon us," Ahmad said.

Ahmad declared that Pakistan is no longer militarily weak "and India will not now receive the same support — from the Soviet Union — that it did in the 1971 war over Bangladesh."

"If the Muslim world openly supports Pakistan, India will not dare to attack it," he said.

The delegation flew to Saudi Arabia yesterday and held talks with the Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal, and the secretary-general of the Muslim World League, Abdullah Omar Naseef.

Lanka

(Continued from Page 1)

Earlier today, a government statement said the ceasefire, agreed between government negotiator Shaul Hameed and Tiger leaders after two days of talks, had been satisfactorily observed except for a few minor violations.

More than 400 people have been killed since last Monday when Tiger rebels launched a spate of fierce attacks on army and police bases in the north and east.

They said President Ranasinghe Premadasa tonight was discussing the situation with senior aides.

"It is likely that the ceasefire may be called off tomorrow if rebel attacks continue," a security official said.

The attacks by the Tigers, the most powerful Tamil group, caught the government by surprise.

Colombo opened peace talks with the Tigers in May 1989 aimed at persuading them to abandon their 8-year armed struggle for a separate homeland for minority Tamils.

Yesterday, the government and the Tigers agreed that steps should be taken to reopen police stations closed by the recent fighting and that all outstanding issues should be resolved through negotiation.

At least 378 people, including 137 unarmed policemen massacred by the Tigers, have been reported killed since the previous ceasefire broke down last Monday in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

The death toll was compiled from accounts by witnesses, military sources and the Tamil Tiger guerrillas. There has been no official overall toll. The government has acknowledged losing only 40 soldiers, while the Tigers admit only 72 guerrilla deaths.

The ceasefire went into effect at 6 pm (1230 GMT) Saturday, five days after the Tigers started besieging a score of police stations and captured more than 850 policemen. The government rushed reinforcements to the area and claimed to have retaken seven stations before the ceasefire.

There has been no word on the fate of the policemen, except for the 137 reported massacred by a survivor and military sources.

A few ceasefire violations were reported last night and again today. But overall, a government spokesman said, "reports indicate the ceasefire has been satisfactorily observed."

One soldier was killed today in Yavuniya, a Tiger-controlled town 217 km (137 miles) northeast of Colombo in the centre of the island, the communique said.

50 believed dead in boat collision



DHAKA, June 17, (UPI): Fifty people were missing and believed dead after two passenger boats collided head-on last evening on the river Teesta in Brahmanbaria district, about 60 miles (100 km) southeast of Dhaka, authorities said.

Two bodies were recovered from the river and several people swam ashore, but the remainder of about 100 passengers travelling on the two boats were missing, officials and witnesses said.



Barbie Doll in Kuwait

Celebrating its 50th Anniversary season, North America's favourite ice spectacular, Ice Capades, are performing in Kuwait from 18th to 24th June and one of its major stars is 'Barbie Doll'. Earlier this month Barbie was in Kuwait to give a spectacular press preview at the Ice Skating Rink. As beautiful Barbie glides on ice she makes even grown-ups, not only children, believe in the wonders of Barbie Doll. Tickets are on sale at the Kuwait International Hotel. At the hotel where she is staying a room has been set up in true Barbie style — all in shades of dainty pink.

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Trump, staff mark birthday

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey, June 17, (UPI) — A smiling, waving Donald Trump was honored yesterday at a birthday rally attended by employees of his three casino hotel properties while negotiators met with bank creditors in an effort to hold his empire together.

Trump has a 10-day grace period, which started at 12:01 am yesterday, to make good on the more than \$42 million in interest and principal payments he owes on bonds for his Trump's castle casino. He defaulted on the payments Friday, bringing him a step closer to bankruptcy.

The morning coffee-and-Danish party on the boardwalk outside the Taj Mahal hotel-casino was organized by hotel management "as an expression of support for Mr. Trump," according to casino spokesman Karen Tuso. It was attended by about 2,000 people, mostly employees who were not working, their spouses and children who played with balloons, beachballs and frisbees.

Party

"Happy birthday, Donald" and "we love you, Donald" were the rallying cries of the faithful as Trump joined the party about two hours after it began. A band struck up "happy birthday" as he inspected a huge, 12-page birthday card and moved through the crowd shaking hands with employees and celebrity well-wishers including Peter Allen, Joe Piscopo, Pat Cooper, Robin Leach, and Buster Poindexter.

The real estate developer turned 44 last Thursday but celebrations were deferred until yesterday due to frantic activity by the Trump organization to persuade banks to loan the real estate tycoon another \$60 million.

Trump's family, close friends and entertainers planned a more lavish birthday bash last night at the Trump castle, organized as a champagne dinner. Dolly Parton was reportedly sending a taped birthday message.

The issued payments on junk bonds issued to finance Trump's castle marked the "first" time Trump was "unable to meet obligations on the \$1.5 billion public trading debt that has underwritten the growth of his casinos and various New York City real estate holdings."

Resigned

Late Friday First Fidelity Bank NA, the New Jersey Bank acting as trustee for the bonds, said it resigned to avoid appearance of a conflict of interest. The bank's major responsibility as trustee is to collect interest and principal payments.

Earlier, the Trump organization announced in a terse statement that principal and interest payments due June 15 on two series of bonds issued by Trump's Castle Funding Inc. to fund the casino "are not being made."

First Fidelity said it had sent a notice of default to Trump's Castle Funding Inc. which should have been received yesterday.

Trump technically has a 10-day grace period in which to work out a deal before defaulting on the bond payments for Trump's castle. The bank specified that \$15.5 million was due in interest on one mortgage bond issue, along with \$22.6 million in principal. On another bond issue financing Trump's castle casino, interest of \$4.38 million was due for a total of \$42.65 million.

Claim

A default would give Trump's creditors the right to immediately lay claim to the casino.

"Any time you miss an interest payment like this, it puts you closer to going under," said junk bond specialist Lonnie Schaffer, vice-president of capital markets at First Albany Corp. "Unless (Trump) can become friendly with all of his bankers, he's going to have a tough time of it."

Immediately after the Trump announcement, Moody's Investors Service Inc. downgraded about \$925 million of Trump's long-term debt for bonds issued to finance the Taj Mahal and Trump Plaza, saying a "default could occur on the outstanding bonds in November."

Taj Mahal bonds now carry a CAA rating that indicates major risks for investors.



Stephanie is held by her mother Eleni (left) June 16 after receiving the blood transfusion. (Reuters wirephoto)

Stephanie out of danger

Leukaemia girl's father still unhappy

NICOSIA, June 17, (Reuters) — Stephanie Charalambous, a two-year-old Cypriot leukaemia victim given blood despite her parents' religious objections, is out of immediate danger and craving potato chips, doctors said today.

"There is no longer a high risk of immediate complications. Her haemoglobin is at an acceptable level and we are proceeding with chemotherapy," Dr George Marcoulis told Reuters.

"She asked for potato chips for lunch but is still afraid of people around her," he said.

The brown-haired child, receiving treatment at Nicosia Evangelistria Medical Centre, had an 80 per cent chance of recovery, he said.

Health Minister Panikos Papageorgiou, himself a physician, told Cyprus Television yesterday, "the improvement in Stephanie's condition justifies the action we took yesterday in making her a ward of the social welfare department."

He said the government would bear the costs of all further treatment for Stephanie.

"However the girl's father, asked if he was happy that the girl had survived, told the television interviewer, 'I didn't see any improvement. I still feel very unhappy that that someone else's blood is in my daughter's veins.'"

The transfusion raised her haemoglobin count which fell to a dangerous level as the parents kept her away from doctors.

Police are maintaining a round-the-clock vigil at the hospital because parents Titos and Eleni Charalambous earlier discharged their daughter against medical advice from a London hospital to prevent her having a blood transfusion, which they believe is banned by the Bible.

Cyprus President George Vassiliou, who visited the child on Saturday, said he personally intervened to save her.

Beetle Bailey

Funny, says US army

WASHINGTON, June 17, (AP) — For 40 years, the army grumbled about Pvt. Beetle Bailey. He's a real misfit, they said. Lazy. No spit and polish. Drives sergeants nuts. He'll never make corporal. Let him peel potatoes forever.

The one fine day, somebody with silver stars on his shoulders looked around the table and told the men with silver eagles on their shirt collars: Hey, you know, the little guy's funny.

Yes, sir, they all replied, nodding in unison.

And so it was that an incredulous Mort Walker, a cartoonist who once slogged through the mud as a US Army draftee in World War II, was ushered into the Pentagon — the Defence Department's headquarters in Washington — and given a hero's welcome on Thursday.

Walker, who created the Beetle Bailey comic strip in 1950, could hardly believe it. For years, he had braved the army's fire when Beetle and the gang — hapless Zero, fat Sgt. Snorkel, bootlicking Lt. Fuzz, pompous Gen. Halftrack — did something foolish.

On Thursday, he blinked before TV lights in the Pentagon. Generals slapped him on the back and asked for his autograph. One of them gave Walker a framed "certificate of appreciation for patriotic civilian service" with a ribbon in red, white and blue.

The war was over.

"I can't believe I'm actually here," Walker said, "as hard as it is to find anything in the Pentagon, they finally found a sense of humour."

"Through it all, you have entertained us, although sometimes we haven't always liked it," said Brig. Gen. Bill McClain, the army's public affairs chief.

McClain confessed that he reads Beetle Bailey "and I laugh at it, and others do, too."

Maj. Gen. Richard Stephenson said, "Beetle Bailey is the vehicle that enables us to see the lighter side of our profession and keeps us from taking ourselves too seriously."

The army brass wasn't always that charitable. They thought the strip presented an unflattering image of army life, that Beetle was a poor role model for modern GIs.

More than 1,800 newspapers world-wide carry the syndicated Beetle Bailey strip.



Doctors reattach woman's torn scalp

SAN FRANCISCO, June 17, (AP) — A woman whose scalp was torn off from the eyelids to the nape of her neck, exposing the skull, had her scalp sewn back on in a 14-hour operation. "She is going to be just fine," the lead surgeon said.

A team of five surgeons worked with high-powered microscopes to replace the woman's entire scalp, small blood vessels and other tissues torn from her head last week in a vineyard accident in Napa Valley.

"She was an attractive woman before... but will be an attractive woman when it's over said Dr. Alfonso Olvera, who conducted the surgery at Ralph K. Davies Medical Centre.

The 33-year-old vineyard manager, whose family asked that her name not be released, was working in the field at Domaine Chandon on June 4 when her hair caught into the rotor of a sprayer crankshaft, the hospital said.

Though horrified, the woman's co-workers had enough presence of mind to preserve the scalp. The woman was sped by ambulance to a nearby hospital in Napa, and then 50 miles (80 kilometres) to San Francisco, where the operation was done within 12 hours of the accident.

Olvera said his team reconnected two of the major arteries to the scalp. Three veins in the exposed skull were rejoined using vein grafts from the woman's feet, and eight blood vessels, some "as small as the width of lead in a mechanical pencil," were rejoined.

Olvera said despite the severity of the accident, the woman will recover with little outward sign of the ordeal. Most of the scars, he said, will be covered by natural skin folds and hair.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

SPRINGFIELD, Massachusetts: Mr. Universe Matthew Dufresne faces federal charges of conspiring to smuggle body-building steroids into the United States.

Dufresne, 24, was indicted Tuesday on charges of conspiring to import steroids from Belgium and with possession of 5,000 doses of the drug.

In October, he was chosen Mr. Universe by the North Atlantic Body Building Association; the second person to win that title in the same year he was Mr. America.

Anabolic steroids are used to build muscles and stamina but can have dangerous side-effects and are banned by international athletic associations.

The charges against Dufresne carry up to 13 years in prison and fines of \$250,000. (AP)

MIAMI, Florida: Comedian Jackie Mason has been ordered to pay \$2,000 a month in child support to a 37-year-old former girlfriend he denies getting pregnant.

A Florida state appeals court Tuesday upheld a ruling in favour of Ginger Reiter, who filed a paternity lawsuit three years ago alleging Mason had fathered her 4-year-old daughter, Sheeba Seger.

The 60-year-old comic denies he is the father and had appealed the earlier child-support ruling.

A judge had ruled that blood tests show there is a 99.94 per cent chance that the girl is Mason's daughter.

"I feel thrilled because now I can send Sheeba to a religious school," said Reiter, who operates a singing telegram service. "I have collection agencies housing me."

Mason's lawyer, Gerald Mager, declined to comment. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: A drifter who nearly killed actress Theresa Saldana in a knife attack eight years ago has been ordered to stand trial on charges of sending her threatening letters from prison.

Municipal Judge Shasta Seger issued the ruling Wednesday in the case of Scottish-born Arthur Jackson, 54.

"I am very grateful," Miss Saldana said in a statement. On Tuesday, the actress, who was in the movie *King of the Hill*, testified Jackson had sent her terrifying death-threat letters.

Jackson, an obsessed fan who stalked the actress and attacked her, was convicted of attempted murder and sentenced to 12 years in prison in 1982.

His sentence was cut in half for good behaviour and he was due for release in April, but the new charges have kept him behind bars.

The charges carry up to six years in prison. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Carroll Shelby, designer of the powerful car that bears his name, is doing well after a heart transplant surgery.

"He's doing fine, according to the hospital's transplant coordinator," the spokesman, Glenn Campbell, said. He said Shelby hasn't been able to get out of bed yet, but "the recovery is going along normally."

Shelby, 67, received the heart during a four-hour operation at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre on Thursday night. No information on the donor was released.

Shelby is a three-time US sports car driver of the year and designer of the Shelby Cobra. He also worked as a consultant for Chrysler Motors on the design of its new Viper sports car. (AP)

THACKERVILLE, Oklahoma: Chubby Checker was a passenger on a bus that struck a semitrailer, but the '60s rocker was not among the five people injured.

The bus was carrying a dozen passengers when it slammed into the rear of an 18-wheeler, authorities said. The accident closed both southbound lanes of Interstate 35 just north of the Texas line.

"He's on there," said Charles Lynch, a supervisor for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, referring to Checker. "He's just wandering around. He isn't hurt. About four or five were hurt."

Five people were being treated for minor injuries at the Love County Health Centre in Marietta, said hospital spokesman Richard Barker. "We did not treat Mr. Checker," he said. "He was not injured." Barker added.

Checker gained international fame three decades ago as the man who popularised the Twist. (AP)



Nordic Empress

More than a hundred spectators' boats and crowds of people on shore greet Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's newest ship Nordic Empress as it arrives in Miami June 16. The 1600 passenger liner built in France is designed for three and four night cruises and will officially join the RCCI fleet to begin operation following its christening June 22. (Reuters wirephoto)

LONDON: A 1964 acoustic guitar from the collection of English classical guitarist Julian Bream has been sold for \$26,000, a world auction record for the instrument, Sotheby's auction house said.

The guitar, made by Robert Bouchet in Paris, was bought Thursday by a Japanese dealer whose name was unavailable. The previous record was \$18,500, paid in 1974 for a South German guitar made in 1624.

Acoustic guitars are the traditional models of the instrument and they tend to wear out fairly quickly when used. Bream has seen he plays his guitars for two years and then likes to sell them to others to play. (AP)

URBANA, Illinois: Is your dog feeling feeble? Your cat miserable? Conventional cures don't help? Take your suffering pet to the acupuncture vet.

After spending 120 hours in Florida learning the ancient Chinese art of acupuncture, Ellen Paul has brought her skills back to Urbana to improve the health of ailing dogs and cats.

Take Divot for example — a dog with more than the usual canine aversion for cats. She's allergic to them, and when her skin itches, she tugs at it with her teeth, leaving scars behind.

For the cure, Divot stood atop a table, her paws sliding on stainless steel while Paul stuck needles in the dog's coat and wiggled them.

"This is the worst part," said Paul. "Once the needles are in, they get bored and want to leave." (AP)

BOSTON: Actor Robert Morse received the eighth annual Elliott Norton Award for his portrayal of Truman Capote in the play *Tra*.

The award, named for retired Boston theatre critic Elliott Norton, is given for "distinguished contribution to the theatre in Boston during the preceding years."

The award includes a silver medalion and \$1,000. Morse previously won the Tony Award, the Drama League Award and the Outer Critics Circle Award for his performance in the play, which is now on Broadway.

Tra, by Jay Pressen Allen, was presented last fall in Cambridge by the American Repertory Theatre. (AP)

Nike sues Madonna

PORTLAND, Oregon, June 17, (AP) — Nike Inc. is suing Madonna over an endorsement contract for which the singer claims she is owed \$4.25 million.

Madonna and lawyers for her company, Boy Toy Inc., say she has a contract with the athletic sportswear company. The Nike lawsuit says there is no contract.

In October 1989, Madonna began talking to Nike officials about an endorsement contract for Nike shoes and a promotional video, according to the lawsuit. Madonna's executive manager, Thomas Demann, initiated the contract with Nike, according to court records.



Tough being a woman

Cybill Shepherd, who turned 40 this year, says "there are doors that close for every door that opens" for an aging actress.

"John Wayne once said, when he was asked whether he would be an actor again if he had to do all over, 'well, I would, as long as I wasn't a woman,'" Shepherd says in the July issue of McCall's magazine. "We don't have much acceptance of aging, period, and it's more difficult to be a woman."



Harsh realities

For 17 years Anjelica Huston lived in the limelight of her father, Jack Nicholson. But now, with Nicholson out of the picture, she is stepping into her own spotlight.

Their erratic relationship came to an end last year when Nicholson had an affair with a former waitress, Rebecca Broussard, who had Nicholson's baby in April.

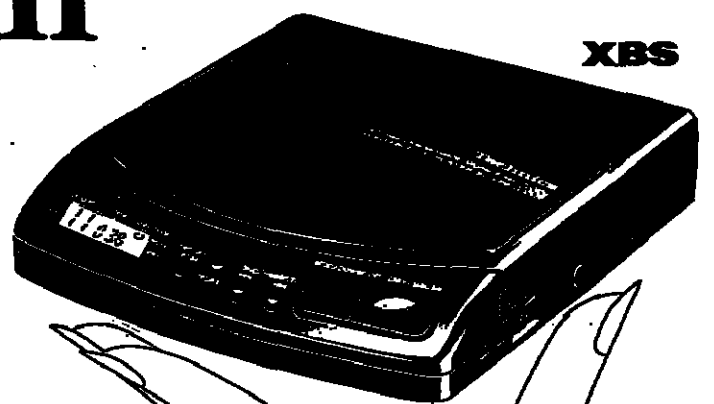
Huston, who won an Oscar for her role in "Prizzi's Honour," said her recent screen work has mirrored and helped her life.

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Underwater robot finds gold bar, part of sunken treasure

TAMPA, June 17, (AP) — A gold bar plucked by an underwater robot from a shipwreck in 1,500 feet (450 metres) of water off southwest Florida provides strong evidence that treasure hunters have located part of a gold-laden fleet sunk in 1622.

Official seals of the Spanish Crown on the 1 pound, 8 ounce (672-gram) bar indicate it may be part of a fleet of ships lost in a 1622 hurricane in the treacherous waters south of Key West, said marine archaeologist Robert Marx.

The bar resembles gold carried by the Nuestra Señora de Atocha, a galleon discovered in shallow water in the Keys by treasure hunter Mel Fisher in 1985. That discovery

yielded gold and artifacts worth \$400 million.

The latest wreck is the first intact Spanish galleon ever found in deep water, the treasure hunter said.

Seahawk Deep Ocean Technology, founded by Marx in 1986, spotted the gold bar last week during part of a survey in preparation for archaeological excavation 75 miles (120 kilometres) from land, said Seahawk director Dan Bagley III.

"Since gold bars often had marks lending clues to the ship's identity, our excavation team decided to bring this piece up to investigate immediately, rather than completing the survey and coming back," Bagley said.

Frogs, salamanders are disappearing world-wide

MIAMI, June 17, (AP) — Frogs, toads and salamanders are vanishing around the world in a trend biologists say appears linked to the planet's deteriorating environment.

From the United States to India, Japan and Australia, scientists report whole amphibian populations have disappeared or are declining, even in protected reserves.

"There is no consistent pattern," says University of Miami biologist Marc Hayes. "There doesn't seem to be any obvious global cause — except that almost all seem to be man-made."

Hayes, who heads a new US Committee on Declining Amphibians, says humans should worry not only because of the loss of animal species,

but because amphibians' highly sensitive biology make them the "canary in the coal mine" — an environmental early warning system.

Amphibians, including frogs, toads and salamanders, were the first land vertebrates. They appeared 400 million years ago, long before dinosaurs, and about 200 million years ago evolved into species similar to present-day varieties.

That longevity appears imperiled. Studies presented at an international conference in February documented a sharp drop world-wide in amphibian populations.

Leopard frogs are no longer sighted in Canada. The common European toad has disappeared from regions in Norway. Three species of

miniature frogs vanished from Puerto Rico. Salamander populations are shrinking in the western United States, and Japan reports several frog species are in decline.

A recently discovered Australian frog that fascinated biologists because it hatched its young in its stomach apparently became extinct in only one season. The Monte Verde nature reserve in Costa Rica reports all of its amphibian populations have declined, and the golden toad that once carpeted its forests may be extinct.

Some causes of the phenomenon are known, and vary from country to country. But cases such as the loss of frogs in Australia or US preserves leave biologists puzzled.

"In some of the areas that are the most protected, frogs are disappearing, and we have no explanation for it," Hayes says. "There are a whole suite of species that have disappeared from very wide ranges in the United States."

David Wake, a zoologist at the University of California at Berkeley who chaired the February conference, says acid rain could be one of the culprits killing salamanders in the Rocky mountains of the western United States.

Hayes says ultraviolet light is a known threat to frog's eggs, and increased amounts of the harmful radiation entering through the thinning ozone layer could be destructive. Another hazard for frogs is

Divers plan rescue of sea turtles as slick moves towards shore

GALVESTON, Texas, June 17, (AP) — Loggerhead sea turtles are threatened by crude oil creeping closer to shore from the crippled supertanker *Mega Borg*, which spewed more goo into the Gulf of Mexico yesterday.

Divers were planning a rescue mission to pluck about five loggerhead turtles from waters near the slick's leading edge, said Edward Klima of the National Oceanographic and

Atmospheric Administration.

Loggerhead turtles are a threatened species that can grow up to 4 feet (1 metre) long and weigh up to 200 pound (90 kilos), he said.

He said if the turtles eat floating tar balls, mistaking them for food, they could die. No other marine life appeared to be threatened, he said.

About 4.6 million gallons (17.5 million litres) of oil have spilled from the Norwegian tanker since it was wrecked by an explosion June 8, coast guard Lt Cmdr Frank Whipple said yesterday. The figure makes the *Mega Borg* spill the fifth-worst in US history.

Coast guard officials believe most of that oil evaporated or burned in the inferno following the explosion.

In south Florida's Everglades, Hayes notes, pig frogs were hunted for food almost to extinction in the 1930s, and have never fully recovered. That pattern is being repeated in India and Indonesia.

Changing weather patterns caused by global warming could be to blame for the disappearance of amphibians in Costa Rica's Monte Verde nature preserve, said Hayes. Or roads and other development might be preventing them from moving between the many interconnected habitats they need to live, he said.

Chilean funeral to honour the dead

IQUIQUE, Chile, June 17, (Reuters) — Thousands lined the streets of this northern town yesterday to bid farewell to 14 political prisoners discovered buried in a mass grave, victims of a military firing squad after Chile's 1973 military coup.

The crowds, some carrying Chilean flags tied with black ribbons, applauded steadily as the coffins, bearing photographs of the dead and draped with flowers, were lined up in the middle of the church.

Former inmates of the prison camp where the victims were held took part in the mass and helped carry the coffins two miles (3 km) to the cemetery.

Outside people carried banners reading "truth and justice for the crimes committed by the dictatorship" and "Chile will always remember them."

The 14 buried were the first of 20 bodies discovered two weeks ago in the mass grave in the isolated fishing village of Pisagua, which was used by the military as a prison camp after a coup led by General Augusto Pinochet.

Extremely dry conditions kept the corpses, which had been buried in potato sacks, perfectly preserved, the bullet wounds showing and their features twisted in agony. One was identified after a letter to his father was found in his clothes.

The military said most were shot after "war tribunals" had condemned them or while allegedly trying to escape.

Former inmates of the camp, through which as many as 2,000 passed after the coup, said prisoners were tortured there.

The discovery of the mass grave has put pressure on the government of President Patricio Aylwin, who took office from Pinochet three months ago, to investigate human rights violations committed during 16-1/2 years of Pinochet's rule.

Santiago Archbishop Carlos Oviedo said last week that Pinochet, who is still commander-in-chief of the army, should be held responsible for abuses that occurred under his government. More than 700 people disappeared in the repression of leftists, according to the Catholic church.

The military claimed their acts were justified by a state of "internal war" the country was in after the toppling of Marxist President Salvador Allende.

Ecuador: Voters angered by President Rodrigo Borja's failure to control inflation are expected to deliver a sharp blow to his centre-left party in congressional elections, analysts said.

The big winner is expected to be the Conservative Party of former President Leon Febres Cordero, who has promised to put "Borja and his incompetent ministers in their place."

Rancor has arisen between the two politicians since a closely contested 1984 runoff.

If Borja's party loses control of Congress, his leadership could suffer from the same fractious, paralyzing battles with legislators that characterised Febres Cordero's 1984-1988 rule.

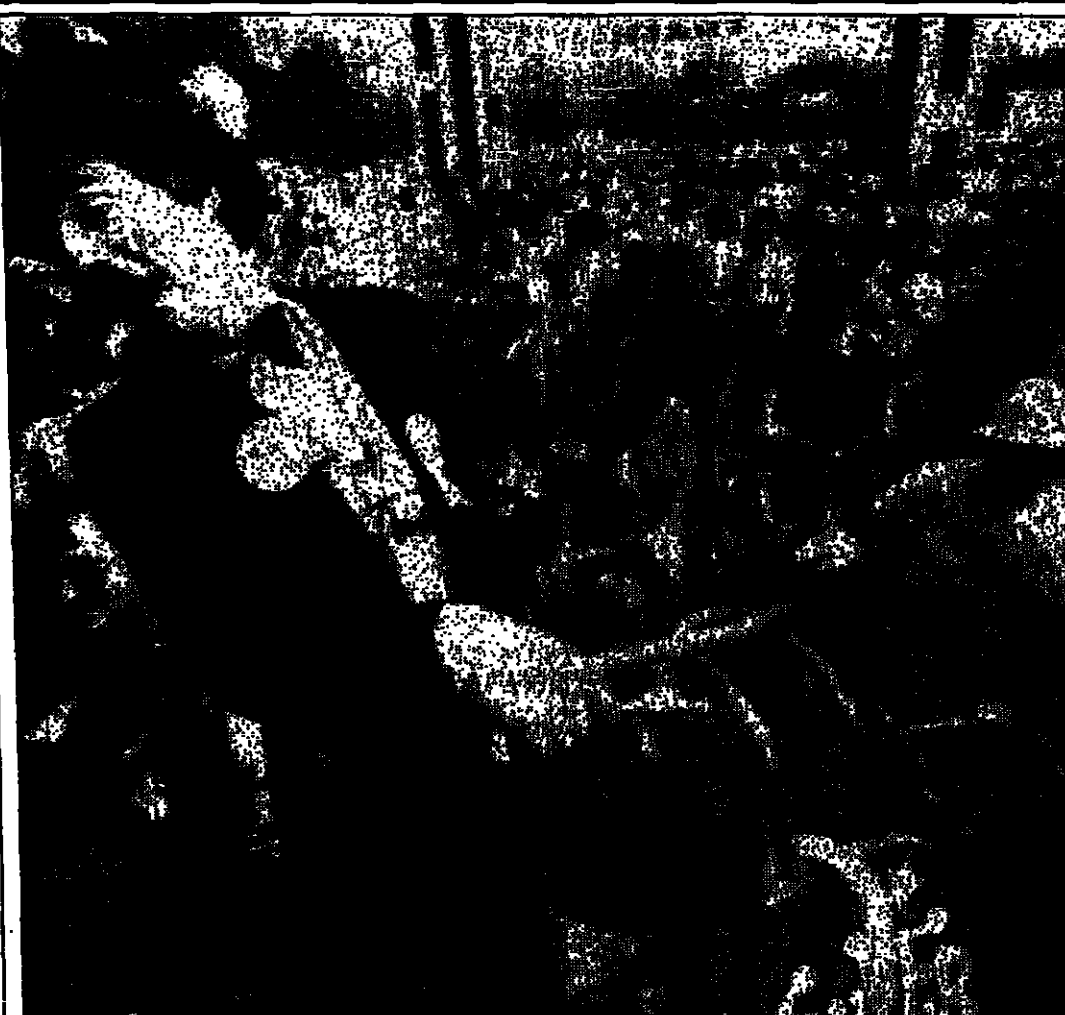
Borja's Democratic Left Party is expected to lose half of the 30 seats it holds in the 72-member unicameral congress, according to voter surveys.

Polls indicate that Febres Cordero's Social Christian Party will increase its seats from seven to between 15 and 20.

Ecuador has 15 registered parties and at least a dozen are expected to elect members to congress.

At stake are 60 seats from districts representing Ecuador's 21 provinces. The seats have two-year terms.

Twelve seats with national constituencies have four-year terms and will not be contested until 1992, (AP)



Bicycle ride

Eight foot tall clown Professor Crump was among those entertaining over 30,000 entrants in the fifteenth annual London to Brighton bicycle ride. (Reuters wirephoto)

Centam summit begins

Discuss ways to improve economies

ANTIGUA, Guatemala, June 17, (UPI) — Six presidents sat down yesterday for a Central American summit to "put the wars behind us" and discuss ways collectively to improve their struggling economies.

The two-day summit began yesterday morning in Antigua, a Spanish colonial town lined with cobblestone streets and topped with red-tile roofs in a valley about 30 miles (48 km) from Guatemala City.

The meeting got off to a late start as presidents, economic ministers, foreign ministers and other officials from Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama gathered around television sets to watch Costa Rica play Brazil in the World Cup.

A Costa Rican government source said President Rafael Calderon, an avid soccer fan, had asked the night before that he be able to watch "at least the

first half." Costa Rica lost 1-0.

In a speech opening the summit, Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo urged his colleagues "to put the wars behind us and begin constructing the means for an exchange of ideas to strengthen democracy."

"If war is an act against humanity, then poverty is an act for which humanity is responsible," Cerezo said. "We have to confront the problems of poverty, injustice and political and social differences between us."

The stated theme of the summit was to seek ways to collectively improve the region's economies, including the formation of a Central American Economic Community along the lines of the European Economic Community for the six Central American countries to trade as a bloc on world markets.



Chamorro thanks Crisanti for offering her a chair June 16 during the opening ceremony of the Central American Economic Summit. (Reuters wirephoto)

"To do that, we first have to remove the internal obstacles to exchange," said Guatemalan Foreign Minister Ariel Rivera. "If we can't openly trade among ourselves, how can we open up to the outside?"

Mid-way through yesterday's work session, the presidents confirmed individually that free trade in the region and finding new markets for Central American goods figured prominently in the talks.

Costa Rican President Rafael Calderon said his country, having the most stable economy of the six nations, would have nothing to lose by forming a common market.

"The situation of Costa Rica is very similar to what other Central American countries aspire to be," he said. "We have to be very clear not to promote competition between ourselves."

US Secretary of State James Baker was scheduled to arrive in Guatemala tonight and meet separately with each of the presidents.

Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo, asked if meeting individually with Baker would hamper opportunities for cohesion, said "we are going to meet with him with a united front."

ment now wants to tear down the wall and open the street.

But Sandinista supporters have painted pictures on the wall hoping to protect it. Neighbours have camped out in front of it to block wrecking crews.

Mayor Arnoldo Aleman says the wall must come down, at least the section that blocks a street in front of Ortega's house.

"The Berlin Wall came down, and so will this one," Aleman told the Associated Press. "I do not care if they put a Picasso on it."

Ortega's sign-painting supporters were unper-

Perquin remains captive to war

PERQUIN, El Salvador, June 17, (AP) — War and rain have made a rusty steel cable 15 metres (50 feet) above a swollen river the umbilical cord between half of Morazan province and the rest of El Salvador.

Isolation that has come with every rainy season since 1983, when guerrillas blew up the bridge, makes a hard life for the 50,000 people north of the Torola river.

They are virtually cut off from May to October, when the river is too deep for even trucks to ford.

The people of this town nestled among mist-shrouded hills pray for the war to end.

Salt, cooking oil, sugar — almost everything except the corn, beans and coffee they grow — must be hauled along the cable in a precarious from gondolas. The gondola also is the only transport for a mother and sick child who must reach the provincial capital, San Francisco Gotera.

The region, along with the northern half of Chalatenango province to the west, is the zone hit hardest by a 10-year civil war that has brutalised this small Central American country.

Rebels destroyed the bridge to hamper the movement of army troops. Soldiers have entered the area by helicopter since.

Perquin is a guerrilla bastion about 50 kilometres (75 miles) northeast of San Salvador. Most of the 600 residents seem to support the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, whose fighters can be found on street corners, talking with townsmen.

On the last Sunday in May, about 400 rebels gathered in the main square to hear a speech from the top guerrilla field commander.

With scores of villagers looking on, several dozen fighters received shoulder patches, distinguishing them for valor during and after the big rebel offensive in November.

The people of Perquin feel the cost of war daily. Strict limits are imposed on the amount of food each family may take north from the provincial capital each month.

Medicine, books, adult clothing and flashlight batteries — there is no electricity north of the Torola — are considered war material and are confiscated at roadblocks.

Some kinds of fertilizer are banned because they can be used to make explosives.

"I've grown tired of arguing with them," said Juan Jose Rodriguez, a farmer riding in the back of a truck from Perquin to the river. "They refuse to accept the obvious truth that we who are not guerrillas also need shoes and clothing and batteries."

Because they have suffered in greater measure, the people of Perquin want peace perhaps even more than the rest of their 5 million countrymen.

"We can't take anymore," said Modesto Diaz, a 61-year-old farmer. "Peace would be the best thing, but it is not a simple matter of laying down the guns. There have to be changes and accords first."

Diaz said the army killed his brother and a nephew in 1983.

"Someone incorrectly reported them as guerrillas, so the soldiers came and killed them," he said. "They didn't bother to investigate."

Government and rebel representatives met for five days in May in Caracas, Venezuela, to set an agenda for concluding the war. The UN-sponsored talks are the most promising in six years, but great differences remain.

sued.

"This is not Berlin, Aleman," said one sign painter on the wall.

When the mayor threatened to send a city crew to tear down the wall, neighbours — many of whom had their own modest homes built by the Sandinista government — organised a protest and slept next to the wall to protect it.

Then members of the Sandinista Cultural Association painted murals on the wall and challenged the mayor to destroy "art."

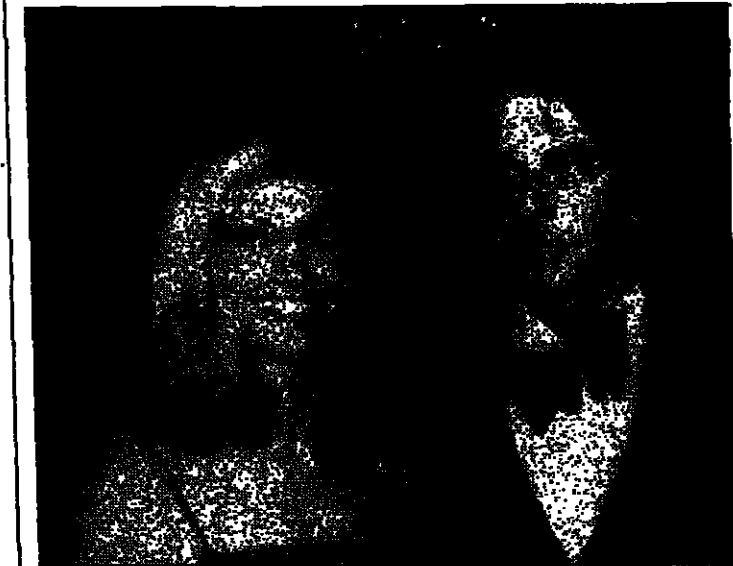
Europe united to tackle pollution

EEC pledges assistance

DUBLIN, June 17, (Reuters) — East and West Europe united this weekend in determination to combat a communist-bequeathed environmental catastrophe that has overtaken nuclear war as the greatest threat to their people.

"We are talking about the survival and health of our continent," said the European Economic Community's commissioner for the environment, Carlo Ripa di Meana.

Environment ministers from across Europe launched an urgent initiative yesterday to tackle nightmare pollution and dangerously inadequate nuclear plant safety, blighting central and East European states after decades of communist policies.



You can make a difference

Singer Olivia Newton John, (left) the new goodwill ambassador for the United Nations environment programme says individuals can help save the environment in simple ways.

"I can tell people that they can make a difference, that they should not feel powerless and feel the problem is up to someone else," she said.

She said people can help by buying recyclable goods, turning off the tap when brushing their teeth and avoiding products that endanger animals.

As goodwill ambassador, the Australian-born Newton John, who is now a US citizen, will undertake missions world-wide, including a visit to the UN programme headquarters in Nairobi in August for a "celebrity safari."

Murillo has not left political life

Loss means liberation

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, June 17, (AP) — For Rosario Murillo, former President Daniel Ortega's companion of many years, the outcome of February's elections meant liberation as well as loss.

"There's no doubt I'm happier now," she says. "I had a series of responsibilities that didn't let me do it."

Murillo, a poet and singer, headed cultural institutions during nearly 11 years of Sandinista rule. She has not left political life, but moved out of her office into the street to try to revive stagnant party spirit and bolster wavering militants.

"It could be that we bureaucratized ourselves too much in power; that's the natural tendency," Murillo said in an interview after leading protesters at the supreme court in a medley of sometimes nostalgic revolutionary songs.

"Artists didn't perform in the street" while the Sandinistas governed "because the rules made it too hard," she added. "You had to talk to 50 bureaucrats to get permission to do one performance."

She said Sandinista singers, artists and writers will now have a chance to put political content back into their work. Even Sandinista artists had been "just wanted for entertainment," she said.

Murillo has found a new vocation in protesting President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro's government.

In the past month, she has spoken almost daily to workers, students and artists.

The audiences are small compared to past Sandinista crowds. Only 1,200 people, most of them employees of the government telephone company, appeared at the supreme court on May 22 to demand that it overturn a new civil service law.

On May 25, Murillo protested a government plan to reopen a public street that passes through a Sandinista compound where she and Ortega live.

The Sandinistas, experts in symbolic battle, said the government's desire to tear down the brick wall blocking the street symbolised efforts to destroy everything the Sandinistas had built, including free health care, public education and land reform.

"It's also an attack on the security of the party," said Aldo Cajina, a Sandinista Party worker who rushed to the compound to support Murillo.

Their historic meeting, the first of its kind, would have been unthinkable before last year's rush towards democracy lifted the iron curtain that had divided Europe since World War Two.

"This was a conference of solidarity," Ripa said. "The European Economic Community will work with these countries to save and improve the environment of the whole of Europe."

The EEC pledged technical assistance and substantial though unspecified amounts of financial aid to help with monitoring air, water and soil pollution and modernising or replacing the ageing industrial and power plants that are largely to blame.

The community also resolved to work out codes of conduct with business to ensure West European companies that set up plants in the newly liberalising economies of the east do not use cheap and dirty technology.

For their part ministers from central and Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union, agreed to introduce tough environmental standards urgently and to vet new industrial projects for their impact on the environment.

"It was not a begging bowl attitude," Ireland's Padraig Flynn, the conference host, said of the eastern governments.

"These countries are going to do a lot to help themselves and they will do it as quickly as possible despite the fact that the costs involved are horrendous."

Romania had been expected to join Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union at the talks, but pulled out at the last minute after last week's clashes in Bucharest that have called into question the government's commitment to democracy.

Ripa said environmental data supplied by Romania so far had been totally inadequate, and the meeting's final communiqué made clear Bucharest, and others, would get EEC help only if democratic reforms continued.

It had been clear long before the conference that pollution levels in central and Eastern Europe were serious, and many of their Soviet-built nuclear reactors, similar to the Chernobyl plant that exploded in 1986, unsafe by Western standards.

In Bulgaria and other countries, popular anger over such issues played an important role in sparking pro-democracy movements that swept away old guard communist regimes last year.



Loves 3 things

President Guillermo Endara says he loves three things in this world. God, the Panamanian people and his new bride.

Endara, 54, married 23-year-old Ana Mae Diaz in a two-hour Roman Catholic ceremony at Metropolitan Cathedral. Ambassadors of the United States and Latin American and European countries were among the guests.



Wasn't that great mate?

A senior Welsh guard breaks into a smile with a colleague while inspecting his uniform during the Trooping of the Colour June 16. This event is to mark the official birthday of Queen Elizabeth II. (Reuter wirephoto)



Protest suspended

Solidarity leader Lech Walesa (shown above right) persuaded farmers Saturday to suspend a protest over low milk prices that had blocked roads and shut down dairies in northern Poland. It was the second such success for Walesa in three weeks. On May 28, he got railroad workers to end a strike that was paralyzing Poland's Baltic ports. The announcement that the protest in the Mława region, 80 miles (130 kilometres) north of Warsaw, was suspended until July 3 came after three hours of talks between Walesa and disgruntled farmers. In both disputes, the protesters demanded government intervention to protect them from the harsh effects of the government's shock treatment to transform Poland's socialist economy into a free-market system. The government, however, has stuck to its vow not to make special concessions. The farmers complained that their local dairy, deeply in debt, has not yet been paid for milk delivered in May and that the price it paid for their milk was cut to 2 cents a quart in June, compared to 5 to 6 cents in April. (Reuter wirephoto)

Victory repairs taking 70 years

Battle of Trafalgar

PORTSMOUTH, England, June 17. (Reuter): The battle of Trafalgar was won in less than a day but restoring the badly damaged flagship which led the British fleet to victory is taking more than 70 years.

HMS Victory, which defeated the French and Spanish and scuppered Napoleon's plans to invade Britain almost two centuries ago, now sits wrapped in scaffolding in Portsmouth harbour in southern England.

A dozen Defence Ministry shipwrights swarm over the bow of the black-and-yellow ship.

The restoration, which began in 1922, is now about 60 per cent complete and should be finished by 1996, ready for the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar celebrations in Portsmouth in 2005, said Ken Poate, head of the shipwrights.

The outnumbered British warships under Admiral Horatio Nelson defeated the French and Spanish fleet under French Admiral Pierre de Villeneuve west of Cape Trafalgar, off the Spanish Mediterranean coast, on October 21, 1805.

French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte subsequently abandoned his plans to invade Britain.

"We were able to inflict a defeat of such magnitude against the French at Trafalgar that they were never again able to threaten our shores," said Lieutenant-Commander John Whitehead, the present commanding officer of the Victory, which is still regarded as part of the British Navy.

Nelson was shot and mortally wounded by a French musketeer in the fighting. His body was preserved in a barrel of brandy and sent to England to be buried in Westminster Abbey.

The restoration of the victory is a painstaking task. "Every piece is moulded from the original," said Poate, referring to the replanking work.

His shipwrights have no original plans of the Victory to guide them. Instead, the craftsmen must take out every piece of oak—often rotten with damp and gnawed by the death watch beetle—and replace it with more durable and beetle-resistant Burmese teak or cheaper African iroko wood.

The British taxpayer is currently paying £2 million (\$3.2 million) a year to restore the Victory. Much of the expense was due to the high-quality teak, which cost up to £3,000 (\$4,800) per cubic metre.

Tories split over timing of next general polls

LONDON, June 17. (Kuna): The government of UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is split over the timing of the next general election, following further bad news this week about the UK economy, it was reported in London today.

The Daily Telegraph newspaper said some ministers believe the impact of continuing high inflation, which has now reached almost 10 per cent, and high interest rates, have wrecked any chances of calling an early election.

The problem is compounded by new divisions in the cabinet about the timing of Britain's entry into

the European exchange rate mechanism, the paper added.

And it pointed out that the government has still not resolved the problem of how to tackle the unpopularity of the new local taxation system, the poll tax.

As a result, ministers are now warning the prime minister that it will be impossible to call an election before 1992 and that the present Parliament will have to run a full five years if there is to be any hope of a fourth successive election victory, the paper said.

Wanted: formal jobs for UK royals

LONDON, June 17. (Reuter): Britain's Queen Elizabeth has asked Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to find formal jobs for some of her royal family, the Sunday Express newspaper says.

It quoted a member of the Queen's Privy Council, an advisory group of elder statesmen, as saying she "firmly believes that it would be helpful if the younger royals...could be involved in work based on the principle of service and responsibility."

He said Queen Elizabeth particularly wants clear-cut roles for her youngest son Prince Edward, a royal marine drop-out, and the helicopter-flying Duchess of York, wife of naval aviator Prince Andrew.

The councillor, who was not identified, said the request for "workable options" from the government was made at a recent audience at Buckingham Palace. There was no immediate comment from the palace on the newspaper report.

Prince Edward's low-key job with composer Andrew Lloyd Webber's Theatre Company and the Duchess' expensive lifestyle, largely funded by the British taxpayer, have led to frequent lampooning in the popular press.

Prince Charles, heir to the throne and an outspoken critic of environmental pollution, has



Members of the royal family watch the flypast during the Trooping of the Colour June 16. They are (from left to right) Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Philip, Prince

William, unidentified, Prince Harry, Prince Charles, unidentified, Princess Diana, unidentified. (Reuter wirephoto)

been widely praised for interests that go beyond the ceremonial.

His sister, Princess Anne, is president of the Save the Children Fund.

The pro-monarchy Sunday

Express said government jobs could be hard to find because many posts could embroil the royal family in political controversy.

All British cabinet ministers

and other eminent people appointed by the queen belong to the 390-member Privy Council, whose main function is to advise the crown on royal proclamations.

Thousands of people turned out yesterday to celebrate the 64th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II, who was honoured with a massive and colourful parade by British troops.

Bonn to ask for return of Maguire

BONN, June 17. (Reuter): West Germany said today it would seek the extradition of a suspected Irish Republican Army (IRA) member arrested in Belgium if her identity were confirmed.

The woman, named by Belgian police as Donna Maguire, was arrested after a shoot-out in a wood near Hoogetraten, in eastern Belgium close to the Dutch border, yesterday.

The West German federal prosecutor's office in Karlsruhe said it was awaiting official confirmation that the woman under arrest was Maguire.

"If it's her, then we will seek her extradition," spokesman Hans-Juergen Foerster said.

He said Maguire was wanted in West Germany for two attacks last year, including the June 19 bombing of a British Rhine Army barracks in Osnabruck and the July 2 murder of a British soldier in Hanover.

Maguire was arrested on July 12 last year in Ireland and acquitted in February by a Dublin court of carrying explosives for the IRA.

Foerster said West Germany had unsuccessfully asked for her extradition while she was in Irish custody.

After her release, he said, "nobody knew where she was."

Belgian police said after Maguire's arrest she had been travelling with two male companions in a car.

About two hours later, across the border, Dutch police arrested an English-speaking man who was "obviously on the run," said Stephan Worm, a Dutch National Police spokesman. He added the man was believed to be one of the group of three.

Worm said the man refused to give his name or make any other statement. He was being held for extradition to Belgium.

Police on both sides of the Belgian-Dutch border were looking for the other man.

A police spokesman in the north Belgian city of Turnhout said, "we are almost certain that we are dealing with three IRA people."

Police said Maguire, who gave her age as 23, had been travelling on a US passport under a false name. Police seized a big haul of arms in the operation.

The IRA, battling to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, has stepped up its campaign against British Army bases in West Germany.

Last week it claimed responsibility for a bomb in a British Army training centre in the northern West German town of Hameln.

Two weeks ago, IRA gunmen shot dead a British major in Dortmund, and last month it killed two Australian lawyers in the Dutch town of Roermond, mistaking them for British servicemen.

British opera star Eva Turner dies in London aged 98

LONDON, June 17. (Reuter): Opera star Eva Turner, who was regarded as Britain's greatest soprano and won international acclaim in her 5-year singing career, has died aged 98, her family said today.

A relative said Turner died in a London hospital on Saturday after breaking her hip in a fall.

Turner went from humble beginnings in the

opera world, starting out with a British touring company during World War One, to become one of the country's first international opera stars.

During her long career she appeared at the world's leading opera venues, winning particular renown in the title role of Puccini's "Turandot," and after retiring from the stage was active as a singing teacher.

The Italian conductor Arturo Toscanini, who discovered Turner and gave her an international debut at Milan's La Scala opera house in 1924, once said she was the world's best turandot.

When he first signed up Turner for Wagner's "Das Rheingold," Toscanini summed up her operatic talents with the words: "Bella voce, bella pronuncia e bella figura."

March in De Gaulle village

COLOMBEY-LES-DEUX-EGLISES, France, June 17. (Reuter): Thousands of admirers of General Charles de Gaulle paraded through his home village in eastern France today to mark the 50th anniversary of his World War Two call-to-arms from London.

The marchers, carrying French tricolour flags, made their way slowly from several directions, meeting at the base of a massive monument in the form of a Cross of Lorraine, the Gaullist emblem, which dominates the countryside.

The demonstration was organised by the neo-Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) Party, which said between 35,000 and 45,000 people attended, including party leader Jacques Chirac.

Maurice Schumann, a post-war foreign minister and De Gaulle's spokesman during World War Two, addressed the marchers before they laid a wreath at the general's tomb in the village cemetery at Colombey-Les-Deux-Eglises.

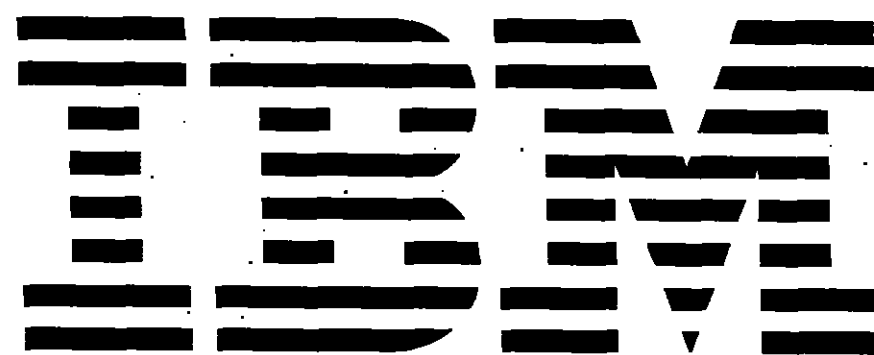
De Gaulle died here in November 1970, aged 80, after suddenly resigning as president the previous year following the defeat in a national referendum of a regional reform project which he backed.

The commemoration was the first of a series to climax in Paris tomorrow, when tens of thousands are expected at a sound-and-light show on the banks of the Seine re-creating the main moments of De Gaulle's wartime career.

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Burma rebels warn junta

MANERPLAW, Burma, June 17, (UPI): Burma's armed rebels, in a show of support for the newly elected opposition party, have promised to end 40 years of civil war once a democratic federal union fair to minorities is formed in Burma.

In a meeting yesterday at its jungle headquarters at Manerplaw, about 130 miles (210 km) east of Rangoon, the Democratic Alliance of Burma also warned its forces would launch a military offensive if the ruling military junta did not turn over power to the pro-democracy opposition party which won last month's elections.

"The federal system which has been demanded and fought for by the indigenous nationalities does not mean secessionism," the alliance of 21 rebel groups said in a statement issued after the meeting.

The alliance promised that once a democratic union treating all ethnic groups fairly was set up, the long civil war would end and the groups would "never destroy such a federal union nor secede from such a union."

Previously ethnic groups in the alliance accused the central government of discriminating against them and demanded the right to secede from any federal system.

The demand sparked a sporadic civil war that began in 1948 and still continues in Burma's border areas despite strong countermeasures by the Burmese military.

The alliance statement said such a union should provide states for each major ethnic group, power-sharing between the central government and the states, a multi-party system, and guaranteed human rights.

It demanded a smooth transition in power from the military government to the newly elected National League for Democracy and the release of NLD leaders under arrest.

"While we are waiting," said Gen. Bo Mya, the DAP president, "we will request other countries and organisations to pressure the military government, economically and politically, so it will hand over power to the NLD."

Bo Mya, who is commander of the ethnic Karen army, the strongest military group in the alliance, said foreign aid had enabled the Burmese military to hang onto power despite disastrous economic policies.

Dissident student leader Moe The Zan, chairman of the All-Burma Students Democratic Front, warned that if the military regime failed to turn over power, both student and ethnic rebel groups would intensify their attacks.

The student leader said there are more than 2,000 students fighting with ethnic Mon and Karen troops in lower Burma and 1,000 students fighting with the Kachin independence army.

Rebel sources in Bangkok have said, however, the students have little military capability and all the ethnic groups are short of weapons and ammunition.

Camp no better than Vietnam

Galang Gulag

GALANG ISLAND, Indonesia, June 17, (UPI): Had he known about the conditions at Galang refugee camp, Nguyen Binh Tran says he never would have left home.

"I would rather be living temporarily in Vietnam," said Nguyen, who has had only a plastic sheet over his head for shelter since he arrived May 25 on this island, 30 miles (50 km) south of Singapore.

Tran is one of about 16,000 Indochinese refugees who call this 22-square-mile (57-kms) island home. More than 3,000 boat people arrived in the UN-sponsored camp in May alone and officials predict that figure could be higher in June.

Low on funds and lacking roofing materials, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Organisation has resorted to strapping up plastic sheets above slabs of concrete to shelter the refugees.

The plastic offers little shade under the equatorial sun and no protection from the surprisingly chilly sea breezes that come at night, along with hordes of mosquitos.

The lucky refugees sleep in hammocks, but most have only a plastic beach mat to place on the concrete.

The nearest bathing place is a stream half a mile (1 km) away. The stream also served as a communal toilet until latrines were dug recently at the camp's edge.

UN staff are positioning their Geneva headquarters for a near-doubling of their current annual budget of \$1.9 million, but the request comes at a time of refugee aid cuts.

A UN official said he was unaware that the United States, Australia and Britain each have

donated \$1 million to Galang since the United Nations issued an international plea for help in April.

"It (the money) hasn't filtered down to us here on the ground," he said.

Classes at the camp school, run by save the children, were suspended in March when the school was commandeered for living quarters. When it does operate, the school can seat only 650 of the children aged 5 to 16 — one-fifth of the camp total.

Medical care also has been stretched to the breaking point, camp workers say. People who are ill must walk up to 2 miles (3 km) to reach the island's only medical facility.

One section of the camp designated for unaccompanied minors under age 16. There are now 400 such minors and because the special barracks sleeps only 50, most of the children have been farmed out to refugee families. Five full-time Indonesian social workers keep track of their welfare.

The Indonesian military recently arranged a rare tour of the facilities in hopes of attracting international attention to the refugees' predicament.

There have been nearly 10,000 arrivals at Galang this year, relief officials said, adding that many of the most recent arrivals had been pushed back to sea by Malaysian authorities. Malaysia denies the accusation.

But even Indonesia, which has been praised for its generosity with the refugees, is taking a leading role in the international push to stem the flow of boat people.



A group of Cambodian refugee children pose in the Indonesian camp island of Galang. (Reuter wirephoto)

No more festivities

Top security at Akihito's coronation

TOKYO, June 17, (AP): Secrecy and security are being given top priority as the government prepares to hold its first coronation in more than six decades, a celebration leftist radicals have vowed to crash.

In 1928, tens of thousands of cheering, flag-waving Japanese turned out to join in the fun when rice was planted for the late emperor Hirohito's coronation.

Along with balloons and fireworks, the daylong festival featured drummers, fan dancers, government dignitaries and even an aerial stunt show.

But times have changed.

This time there will be no announcement of where to find the two "sacred" paddies used to grow rice that Emperor Akihito will offer to the gods after his Nov 12 enthronement. The rice is traditionally planted in early June.

The government will only say that the rice will be grown in the countless paddies of two prefectures (states), Akita in northern Japan and Oita in the west.

Xuan Ke crusades for Nakhi culture

LIJIANG, China, June 17, (AP): Xuan Ke is a crusader trying to save the culture of his Nakhi people from being swallowed by the Chinese.

Xuan, a musician by training and high school English teacher by trade, is an impassioned man who is convinced he will fail.

"This is a culture that's going to die out," he said bluntly in English. "The Han (Chinese) love that."

For two years, Xuan and his 16-member orchestra, including four musicians in their 80s and four in their 70s, have given concerts of traditional Nakhi music for foreign tourists.

"It's not for the 4-yuan (85-cent) admission fee that we do this. It's for the preservation of our traditional culture and arts," he explains at the start of each concert. The orchestra has performed 79 times for a total of 3,900 people from 31 countries.

The musicians are giving lessons to 22 young people in an attempt to preserve music once passed from father to son.

Nakhi people, Nazi in Chinese, have lived for 2,020 years in this lovely valley of northern Yunnan province near the first bend of the Yangtze river.

They had a matriarchal society in ancient times. Property belonged to the woman and there was no marriage. Women took lovers, who visited only at night, and children never knew their fathers.

Only one group of Nakhis in a remote mountain basin remains matriarchal, but even among other Nakhis, older women dressed in traditional lambskin capes and blue aprons still have more authority.

According to Nakhi history books, the Han Chinese arrived in Lijiang in 1428, when millions of soldiers were sent out to border areas.

Only 250,000 Nakhis remain, making up 32 per cent of Lijiang's population. Their way of living has become similar to the Chinese, and about half the Nakhi language now is Chinese.

"But ... inside our hearts ... runs a kind of special blood," Xuan said.

The champion of Nakhi culture is 60, a refined man with a dark, square face, gold-framed glasses and a quick laugh.

He can talk for hours about his music, his life and his people, filling up an ashtray with cigarette butts. His stories are punctuated with jokes, often self-deprecating.

Xuan was imprisoned for 20 years for criticising the government during the Hundred Flowers Movement of 1957, when intellectuals were encouraged to speak out.

Since returning to Lijiang in 1978, he has used whatever means available to preserve the culture. He spent five years translating from English to Chinese a book by a Russian adventurer who lived in Lijiang for nearly a decade before the communists gained power in 1949.

(See also Page 12)



Balancing on bike

A bicyclist balances on a bike rack in the Philippines while balancing four other bikes in a bid to attract tourists in a public park in Manila. (Reuter wirephoto)

Filipinos back Cory stance

MANILA, June 17, (Kuna): Government-conducted survey shows that most Filipinos agreed with the decision of President Corason Aquino to serve to the United States government the notice of termination of the bases agreement during the recently concluded US military bases exploratory talks.

Press Under Secretary Horacio Paredes today told reporters that the findings were based on the survey conducted recently by the bureau of communication services under the office of the press secretary. Paredes' remarks were carried by Xinhua news agency.

The sample population of the

survey is composed of 102 males and 98 females living in metro Manila, ages 18 and above.

Some 72 per cent agreed with the government decision to hold the exploratory talks with the US and serve the US the notice of termination of the current bases agreement before deciding whether to discuss with Americans a new treaty while 28 per cent disagreed.

Paredes cited survey results showing that 72 per cent or 144 survey-takers believed that the Philippine panel was able to deliver the message regarding the stand of the Philippine government on the bases issue.

American accused of selling SDI plan

LOS ANGELES, June 17, (Reuter): A US engineer was in custody yesterday accused of selling or agreeing to sell "Star Wars" missile secrets to four Japanese firms, US government prosecutors said.

Prosecutors said they were also investigating whether Ronald Hoffman, 51, had sold, or agreed to sell, the top secret technology to firms in West Germany and Italy and to Israel's Ministry of Defence.

Hoffman is accused of using his small defence contracting firm, Plasma Technology of Los Angeles, to export a computer software system known as Contam, an integral part of the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI).

Assistant US attorney William Fahey said his dealings with Japan netted Hoffman "hundreds of thousands" of dollars.

He was formally charged in court on Friday and held on \$500,000 bail.

SDI, popularly known as Star Wars, is a programme to build a space-based anti-missile shield.

Prosecutors said they did not know if the Japanese companies, which were not named in the government's affidavit, realised they were receiving illegally exported material.

In the affidavit, filed to federal court in Los Angeles, the government said Contam was a computer programme designed to analyse the exhaust trail of launched missiles. This analysis enabled tracking stations to identify the type of missiles so a decision could be made on how best to counteract them.

Hoffman is specifically charged with violating US export laws by exporting material without proper authorisation. The affidavit said he had failed to get State Department clearance before he entered into agreements with the Japanese.

He was arrested on Thursday after he accepted a cheque for \$150,000 from US customs agents posing as brokers for South African businessmen, prosecutors said.

Floods kill more than 100 in China's southern province

BEIJING, June 17, (AP): More than 100 people died in floods caused by torrential rains this week in China's southern province of Hunan, an official newspaper said today.

Flooding also killed three people in adjoining Jiangxi province, a separate report said.

The flooding in Hunan destroyed about 16,000 homes, killed 2,905 farm animals and damaged 30,000 water conservancy projects, the People's Daily reported. More than 300,000 hectares

Mutsu ready for final sail

Japan's first nuke ship

MUTSU CITY, Japan, June 17, (Reuter): After trying the patience of several host ports for years, Japan's first nuclear-powered experimental ship has promised to leave soon on a long-overdue voyage.

It is by no means the first time that the Mutsu has been scheduled to put to sea, only to have its departure blocked by controversy and technical hitches.

Given the government's intention to scrap the 130-metre (400-foot) vessel once its year-long voyage is over, critics ask why it must sail at all.

The latest plan for the ship to leave this little port city, on the northeastern hook of Japan's main island, on June 7 was foiled by a malfunctioning reactor coolant pump. It followed a string of other technical hitches this spring.

The ship's sponsors now refuse to set Mutsu's next send-off date until the pump failure has been rectified.

When she finally puts to sea, Mutsu will take up station 100 nautical miles off the coast, where it will drift aimlessly for months of reactor tests.

The experiments are intended to test the potential for operating nuclear-powered vessels and further Japan's quest for self-sufficiency in energy.

"We strongly believe that the era of nuclear ships will come," said Yoichiro Otsuka, the Aomori prefecture representative of the state science and technology agency, which is overseeing the project.

However, he said neither the government nor private industry currently had plans to develop another nuclear-fuelled ship.

The Mutsu project has brought sharp criticism from fishermen and anti-nuclear activists since the ship first docked at Ominato City, south of here, in 1970.

Feelings were further inflamed after Mutsu's reactor shield sprang a radiation leak in 1974 while conducting its first power-up test offshore.

Without permanent repair capabilities at sea, the crew had to call on the ship's cook, who prepared a blend of rice and the element boron, which, when applied to the shield, apparently served to absorb and halt the spread of high-energy neutrons.

Junsaku Tsunoda, head of the Mutsu project at the Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute (JAERI), said the rice was used as an experiment before engineers could design a permanent casing of steel and cement.

Local citizens, sceptical about the safety of such experiments, refused to allow the ship back into port after it underwent a four-year repair job at Sasebo in southwestern Japan. Forced to find a new port, the government finally convinced city officials at Mutsu to play host.

The repeated moves proved costly, inflating the original Mutsu project budget of 7.3 billion yen (now \$49 million) to a total of 59.3 billion yen (\$395 million).

Tsunoda said that, although the project had cost far more than originally planned, it could eventually bring economic benefits to the nation.

Roughly 150 people work at the Mutsu facility, most seconded from construction and electrical power plants.

"We have no choice but to accept the ship, even if it is a nuclear project, because we need to stimulate the local economy," said Fujio Kikuchi, deputy mayor of Mutsu city, located in the poorest region.

"All we can say is that some of the rice will come from somewhere in Akita," said prefecture spokesman Masataka Otomo.

The final word on exactly where the paddies will be made public until after the rice is harvested.

Moving two thrones from western Japan to Tokyo last month for Akihito's coronation became a major tactical operation.

Military helicopters and a convoy of disguised police trucks whisked the disassembled, crated thrones to the capital under cover of darkness.

Authorities say the tight security is needed to guard against attacks from leftist radicals, who have vowed to disrupt any ceremonies related to the monarchy.

But a spokesman for the ultra-leftist Chukaku-Ha, or middle core faction, said in an interview that his often violent group "will continue the struggle to crush the coronation."

The spokesman agreed to be interviewed on condition he not be named.

The anti-monarchy radical left represents only a fraction of the population, which for the most part either accepts or supports the imperial household.

During the mystical rice ritual, which will be held after Akihito is formally enthroned, the emperor is believed to commune with the sun goddess and other Shinto deities.

The rite, called the Daijosa or great food offering ritual, will be conducted in two specially built halls on the Tokyo Imperial Palace grounds late at night and continue into the predawn morning.

Though part of imperial coronations for more than 1,000 years, the Daijosa's religious nature has created an intense debate over whether government plans to provide funds for the ritual violate the postwar constitution. The budget for the entire coronation is 8.11 billion yen (\$55.6 million).

Gorbachev to visit Japan

TOKYO, June 17, Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu said today that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will visit Japan early in 1991, and expressed hope the visit will be a turning point in bilateral relations.

The visit would be the first to Japan by a top Soviet leader, although four Japanese prime ministers have visited the Soviet Union.

"According to a letter I received, President Gorbachev is to visit Japan early next year," Kaifu told a seminar sponsored by the governing Liberal Democratic Party. He did not give an exact date for the visit.

Drop in TV viewing

US households switch off

LOS ANGELES, June 17, (AP): Is the US "couch potato" dead? Television viewers across the country appear to be tuning out and turning off in record numbers, upsetting broadcasters and advertisers alike.

The latest survey by the respected A.C. Nielsen Co. indicates that 2 million US households have simply switched off their television sets — a trend that could spell millions of dollars in lost broadcast revenues.

Nielsen offers no explanation for this drastic and unprecedented decline, but US TV networks, ABC, CBS and NBC say they just don't believe millions of people have abruptly stopped watching.

Others blame a switch to cable television and even home videos.

"The use of the set has been a very, very predictable behaviour," said Alan Wurtzel, ABC's research chief. "All of a sudden, the rug has been pulled out and the behaviour has been changed and no one can explain why."

"Nielsen has lost people they can't account for," he added. "According to them, they have simply gone away."

To realise why Nielsen's figures have turned US TV on its ear is to understand how the company's rating system is the foundation upon which the television industry is built.

"People metres" installed in 4,000 homes across the country provide the ratings that help decide which shows make it and which don't. But more importantly, the Nielsen numbers provide the base for what networks charge advertisers for commercial time.

And these are the Nielsen figures for the first

quarter of this year that have caused such a stir. Seemingly overnight, overall television viewing is down 4 per cent, as compared to the same period in 1989.

In prime-time audiences of women between the ages of 18 and 49 — an audience crucial to advertisers because this group buys most consumer goods — viewership is down nearly 10 per cent.

Enter the controversy. The networks say the Nielsen "people metre" system, used nationally since 1987, is fundamentally flawed and has produced incorrect numbers.

As proof of that alleged inaccuracy, the networks point to localised ratings compiled during a May survey season, which showed a much lower drop-off than the "people metre" counted.

Wurtzel and his counterparts at NBC and CBS blame the apparent drop-off in viewers on "fatigue." Nielsen families are just plain pooped when it comes to punching a button every time they switch the dial, the networks say.

"We think all of these things are related to the people metre," Wurtzel said. "Every time you turn the channel, you've got to punch this button. We're asking people to do something that is far beyond what is reasonable."

Before 1987, Nielsen's national survey relied on boxes that required no viewer effort. The old system told what was on the tube, but not who was watching it. The people metre is designed to show which family member is viewing.

Nielsen stands behind its numbers, saying it has checked and rechecked the people metres and found them to be accurate.

JAN 1990



Adrian Lamir, one of about 50 Romanians seeking political asylum, holds up a newspaper clipping with his photo taken during the December 1989 Romanian revolution. (Reuters wirephoto)

Romanians seek political asylum

Disenchanted with new government, fear reprisals

TELESE, Italy, June 17, (AP): The foot soldiers of the Romanian revolution huddled around a small television Sunday, watching news reports of their pleas for political asylum in the West.

The angry young men whose involvement in last December's revolution earned them free trips to see Romania play in the World Cup said they want to defect because they are disenchanted with the new government. They said they fear reprisals if they return.

Thirty-nine Romanians travelled to Rome and Naples on Saturday to formally request asylum in Italy. The Interior Ministry said it would decide tomorrow whether to consider the request.

Fans staying in Telese, a mountain village northeast of Naples that has welcomed about 1,000 Romanians, said as

many as 100 people would try to defect because they think Romanian President Ion Iliescu has subverted their revolution.

"I was in the front lines of the revolution. I was beaten by the Securitate and arrested, then beaten by the police," said Nicolae Bucatu. "But now I see the system has not changed. I am very angry because many Bucharest people died for nothing."

Bucatu, 25, was working in a factory that makes eyeglasses when he heard on Dec 21 about the protests against communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. He said he left his job and led a group of protesters to the Bucharest headquarters of Securitate.

Bucatu said he was hospitalized for two months with injuries to his head, face and ribs. After taking a job at a small

Bucharest newspaper, "Libertate," he heard that Iliescu's government was offering to send 1,000 people involved in leading the revolution to the World Cup as a reward.

Iliescu, a one-time Ceausescu protégé who turned against his boss, took power after Ceausescu was overthrown. Iliescu was elected president by a huge majority in nationwide elections last month.

But Bucatu and other would-be defectors contended the government planned 200 former Securitate and army officers among the 1,000-person delegation to the World Cup.

The presence of the alleged Securitate members has caused tension among the Romanians sleeping in tents and enjoying free food in Telese. Those trying to defect said the secret police were circulating

among them and threatening reprisals. "I am afraid to go back to Romania," said Marian Baciu, 27, a metallurgist who went to Rome with Bucatu to seek asylum. "But my parents are old and I worry that Securitate will arrest them if I do not go back."

Young men talking excitedly about plans to stay in Italy dropped their voices to a whisper Sunday morning as some ten neighbours passed by. Would-be defectors speaking English to a reporter quickly switched to Romanian as one man neared.

Telese Mayor Pino D'Occhio said representatives of 100 Romanians begged him Saturday to allow them to stay. But D'Occhio said 30 others linked to the army asked to be sent home on the first available flight to avoid being confused with those seeking asylum.

Welcome awaits Mandela in US

NEW YORK, June 17, (Reuters): Nelson Mandela will have Americans at his feet this week, fighting for a glimpse of him, hanging on his every word, buying T-shirts, jackets and caps bearing his name and donating millions of dollars to his cause.

Millions of Americans are waiting to cheer a man unseen and hardly heard from for more than a quarter of a century, a man who emerged unbroken from jail in South Africa in February to become the voice of oppressed black people around the world.

During a 13-day US tour starting on Wednesday, the black nationalist leader will receive a red-carpet welcome at New York's Kennedy Airport and a ticker tape parade down Broadway.

He will meet President George Bush at the White House and has invitations to address the United Nations, a joint session of Congress and a mass rally at New York's Yankee stadium.

His schedule is packed as tightly as a visit by Pope John Paul or Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev — 34 events, ranging from motorcade to meetings with business and political leaders, in eight cities from coast to coast.

Questions about his stamina abound. He is 71 but, as one organiser said, "he has lot of time to make up after spending 27 years in prison."

His visit follows a European tour during which he time and again demanded that sanctions against South Africa must be maintained until it abolished apartheid.

His first stop will be New York, a city reeling under the weight of racial tensions and presided over for the first time by a black mayor, David Dinkins.

He will spend three days as a guest of Dinkins at the mayor's official Gracie Mansion residence and his first event after arrival is the city's highest honour — a ticker tape parade down Broadway.

For his parade, the authorities have designed a special car — a bulletproof "Mandemobile" designed to let him be seen and protected at the same time.

Police likened the security arrangements to those accorded Gorbachev. The police overtime bill is expected to top one million dollars.

One controversy arose over Mandela's decision to meet three Puerto Rican nationalists, once convicted of attacking Congress in the 1950s, and honour them as former political prisoners.

Dinkins at first described the three as "assassins" but he later softened his tone, noting that they had been pardoned after serving 25 years in jail.

New York's large Jewish community has been working hard to prevent Jewish protesters marring the visit. A handful of Jewish activists were upset by Mandela's comparison of Israel to South Africa and by his meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Mandela went out of his way at a meeting in Geneva with US Jewish leaders to assure them that he supported Israel's right to exist and he praised Jews for their support in the fight against apartheid.

One activist, Rabbi Avi Weiss, who has led protests from Auschwitz to the Vatican, said he might hold a demonstration during Mandela's visit, even though he respected him and had long opposed apartheid.

"You have to be insane to give a ticker tape parade to a man who compares Israel to South Africa in a city that has the largest Jewish population in the world," he said. But he added that many people were urging him not to stage a protest.

From New York, Mandela will go to Boston and then to Washington next Sunday for the most important meetings of his trip. He will meet Bush and Secretary of State James Baker and address a joint session of Congress.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported recently that South Africa captured Mandela in 1962 as a result of a tip from a paid informant of the US Central Intelligence Agency.

Bush said he did not know if the story was true or if he would offer Mandela an apology.

From Washington, Mandela will go to Atlanta, where he will lay a wreath at the grave of America's great champion of civil rights, Martin Luther King, and then on to Miami, Detroit, Los Angeles and Oakland.

Mandela flew to Canada on Sunday after an overnight stay in Britain to visit his friend Oliver Tambo, president of the African National Congress (ANC).

Speaking to reporters at London's Heathrow airport, Mandela said: "I met Mr Tambo here and he is recovering very well."

Romania pledges to uphold democracy

US to withhold all but humanitarian aid

BUCHAREST, Romania, June 17, (AP): The government, seeking to contain damage to its image abroad, pledged today to play by democratic rules after earlier thanking coal miners who savagely attacked suspected opponents.

"The government is prepared to assure appropriate measures for freedom of political expression for all with the exception of acts of instigation and of neo-fascist propaganda," said the statement published today.

"It (the government) also demands that those responsible ensure the total freedom of operation of the democratic institutions of the press,

radio and television and ... instill firmly democratic institutions in our country," the statement said.

The statement was carried in the pro-government Adevarul newspaper. It contained no specific guarantees to individuals, groups and institutions targeted by the miners.

Tens of thousands of miners descended on Bucharest Thursday after president-elect Ion Iliescu appealed for support in the wake of violent clashes between police and demonstrators seeking to oust him and other former communists from politics.

Romania marks uprising

TIMISOARA, Romania, June 17, (AP): Thousands of people gathered today on the main square in Timisoara to commemorate those who died in the uprising against communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu that began here six months ago.

The peaceful crowd began assembling well before midday in front of a shrine dedicated to some 100 people who died in the fighting that erupted in December between pro-democracy demonstrators and security forces backing Ceausescu.

Following traditional Christian orthodox memorial practices, victims' families placed remembrance offerings of home-baked breads and boiled wheat before a large wooden cross adorned with wreaths and photographs of about a dozen young men and soldiers.

The 3,000 people in the square were joined after midday by hundreds more who took part in a religious procession from the nearby cathedral where a memorial Mass was held.

A pro-democracy rally that had been scheduled to mark the six-month anniversary of the revolt was cancelled. A lone banner said, "Pity the spilled blood — down with communism."

"Although the people here feel very strongly about the suppression of demonstrations in Bucharest, there will be no protest today, as a mark of respect for our dead heroes," said Helmut Ludescher.



An old woman weeps during ceremonies in Timisoara. (Reuters wirephoto)



Bulgarian Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov accompanied by his daughter Anya toast with some home made Rakia, after casting his vote. (Reuters wirephoto)

'Ex-reds' will keep poll lead

UDF, BSP main contestants

SOFIA, June 17, (Reuters): Bulgarian Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov said former communists would substantially increase their lead in today's second round of the country's first free parliamentary elections in more than four decades.

The reformist Lukanov, who helped reshape the image of the communists after the fall of hardliner Todor Zhivkov last November, is among 162 candidates in 81 single-member constituencies seeking seats in a new national assembly.

The main contestants are the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) and Lukanov's Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), the former Communist Party.

"I expect that we will have nearly half the seats that are being contested," Lukanov told reporters after casting his vote in Sofia.

The BSP won 47.15 per cent of the first round vote compared with 36.2 per cent for the UDF, which is an alliance of 16 opposition groups.

The BSP needs to add 29 seats to the 172 it already has to ensure a majority. The UDF has 107.

The BSP's victory was predicted in pre-election surveys and it is set to become the only former

Communist Party in a Warsaw Pact state to win a mandate to rule in a free election.

Asked what would happen if the BSP failed to clear the 50 per cent hurdle, Lukanov replied: "It would not be a tragedy. We would still have a great presence in the national assembly and it would not be possible to form a government without the participation of the BSP."

He added: "A strong government in Bulgaria is a coalition government or any government which is supported by all the major political forces in parliament. Otherwise you cannot have a strong government in Bulgaria."

UDF leader Zhelyu Zhelev has rejected as political suicide calls to join the BSP in a coalition government.

But Lukanov said he expected a shift in the UDF's attitude after the election was over.

The Moscow-educated economist, one of the more popular BSP politicians, faced a relatively easy challenge from a little known UDF candidate in his constituency of Plevna.

But he is already assured of a place in the 400-seat national assembly as half the seats are allocated from party lists.

Government critics and student leaders say Iliescu and other government leaders want to revive totalitarian rule.

The miners destroyed opposition party offices, shut down publications critical of Iliescu and his National Salvation Front, beat or threatened well-known opposition figures and clubbed Bucharest residents at random. They left Friday as they came, at the behest of Iliescu, who thanked them for their support in a national television speech on Friday.

The government's statement appeared designed primarily to deflect indignation over the role played by Iliescu in the three days of mob rule of the capital.

Western governments and international human rights organisations condemned the violence.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said the United States would withhold all but humanitarian aid, and the European Economic Community postponed a trade and economic co-operation agreement with Romania.

There was no clear indication why Iliescu had called on the miners, but government officials suggested the police had been ill-prepared to handle the demonstrators.

Iliescu said Saturday he was contemplating creation of a National Guard to protect the government and miners of opposition party offices.

"We know that we can rely on you," Iliescu told the miners Friday before sending them home, saying he had "made note" of some miners' wishes to join the paramilitary organisation.

Among the miners' targets was the headquarters of the National Peasants Party.

Standing there Saturday among shards of broken glass, smashed typewriters and furniture, party Secretary-General Ivin Petrina said the struggle for democracy would continue.

"Emotionally we are ready to start today," he told a reporter. "Logically, it could take weeks."

The centre of the city was quiet today, precisely half a year after the outbreak of the bloody revolution that swept communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu from power.

The Romanian government, under fire from the opposition and Western governments for suppressing dissent, pledged yesterday to probe complaints of vigilante action by miners and ensure they were not repeated.

It said it had no hand in the sackings by miners of opposition party offices — and vowed that its commitment to establishing democracy in Romania was irreversible.

Bucharest quiet

A Romanian couple jokes with police guarding the Interior Ministry in Bucharest. The situation remained quiet after three days of violence. (Reuters wirephoto)

Bid to defuse tension with Moscow

Lithuania votes Tuesday

MOSCOW, June 17, (Reuters): Lithuania's Parliament will vote, possibly as early as Tuesday, on a proposal to break its deadlock with Moscow over independence, but a senior official in the rebel republic said today it was likely to be rejected.

Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis told Reuters today the Parliament would consider a moratorium on its March 11 independence declaration and he hoped the republic was on the verge of a compromise with the Kremlin.

He said the Parliament might take up as early as Tuesday a formula proposed by the Lithuanian government that it suspend the declaration for the duration of talks with Soviet leaders.

The proposal was intended to defuse a conflict with Moscow, which refuses to recognise Lithuanian independence.

But Algimantas Cekutis, a member of the independent Lithuanian Communist Party's Central Committee, said he doubted Parliament would approve it.

"People are very suspicious of Moscow," he told Reuters. "This will be a difficult debate. It is more likely that the Parliament will reject it."

The Lithuanian government yesterday said the Parliament should "debate the possibility of declaring a temporary moratorium on the (independence) act for a period during negotiations" with Moscow.

The Supreme Council (Parliament) may discuss this already on Tuesday, when it is next scheduled to meet," Landsbergis said by telephone from the Lithuanian capital Vilnius.

Landsbergis stopped short of endorsing the proposal himself but said: "It is one of the possible formulas for discussion. We will discuss this formula and other

Communists split

Reformists debate to break away

MOSCOW, June 17, (AP): Hundreds of reform-minded communists gathered yesterday to debate when and how to break away from the party and form an opposition group.

One leader of the Democratic Platform movement argued for an immediate break, saying that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev would not be able to reform the Communist Party enough at a coming party meeting to avoid a split.

"The Communist Party cannot be reformed," said Igor Chubais, a philosopher and one of the leaders of Democratic Platform.

Democratic Platform, founded about six months ago, has counted among its members Boris Yeltsin, recently elected president of the Russian Republic, and the mayors of Moscow and Leningrad — Gavril Popov and Anatoly Sobchak.

But those leaders reduced their activities in the reform group when they took on government responsibilities.

The movement now is split on whether it should found a new party immediately and take hundreds of thousands of the Communist Party's 18 million members with them, or wait until after a national party congress that begins July 2.

The nation-wide gathering of Democratic Platform members is to decide that question before it wraps up its conference today.

Any split in the party would be the first since the time of Lenin. Although Chubais argued for an immediate break, others urged caution.

Vyacheslav Shostakovskiy, rector of Moscow's higher party school, urged that the reformers wait until after the party congress when, he said, the party's inability to reform will be even clearer.

To move too quickly would risk worsening the country's tense political situation, he said.

Asked whether Vilnius and Moscow could now find a compromise, Landsbergis, a leader of the Lithuanian nationalist movement Sajudis who has been a determined proponent of Lithuanian independence, said: "I hope so."

But he said it was still not clear whether Moscow would accept the step Lithuanian leaders are contemplating. "At the Kremlin they often change their formulas and demands."

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has called repeatedly for Lithuania to suspend its declaration of independence as a condition for talks with Moscow about the republic's future.

To back up his demands, Moscow has clamped an economic blockade on the republic, cutting off its supplies of oil and gas, and sent a division of Soviet paratroopers to occupy key public buildings in Vilnius.

Cracks appearing in Milosevic's Serbia

Yugoslavia faces new crisis: protesters demand free polls

BELGRADE, June 17, (Reuters): Yugoslavia faces a new crisis after signs of rebellion appeared last week in the biggest republic, Serbia, where communist leaders have resisted a wave of democratic changes sweeping the country.

Western diplomats said that a 30,000 strong anti-communist protest in Belgrade last Wednesday indicated that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic no longer commanded the almost absolute authority he has held for the past three years.

There are nine million Serbs — the country's largest ethnic group — and they are considered pivotal for the country's future development.

The protesters demanded that free elections, already held in two of Yugoslavia's six republics, be conducted in Serbia by the end of the year. They chanted "Slobodan, you are a traitor" and burned Milosevic's picture.

"The rally sank Milosevic's vision of a

homogenous Serbian nation united behind the platform of the Serbian Communist Party," a Western diplomat said.

Serbian leaders have said that they will not hold elections until the republic adopts a new constitution, which could take one year.

Unlike reformist communists in Slovenia and Croatia who paved the way for free elections in April and May, Serbia's communist leaders have stalled on reforms and have not allowed opposition groups to register officially.

In an apparent attempt to counter criticism, the Serbian party said it would merge with the Socialist Alliance, a pro-communist umbrella organisation, into a new Socialist Party which would run in elections.

But the announcement provoked a mixed response and was denounced at the rally as a plot by the communists to gain time and further postpone democratic reforms.

Insistence on the primacy of the constitu-

tion is aimed at neutralising ethnic Albanian opposition parties in the southern Serbian province of Kosovo where they are likely to win a landslide victory in free elections.

The new constitution would limit the autonomy of Kosovo, where over 50 people have been killed in riots for greater freedom from Serbia.

The demonstration, the most serious challenge so far to Milosevic, was followed by a revolt by journalists of Serbia's rigidly controlled media.

Angered at what they said was biased reporting on the rally, journalists from the daily newspaper Politika and Belgrade Television, both of which reflect the views of the Serbian party, publicly dissociated themselves from the reports.

"Cracks are appearing in Milosevic's Serbia," a veteran Yugoslav journalist said. "It is hard to say how popular the opposition really is, but many people may vote for anyone just to get the communists out."

Kohl, Maiziere in total agreement

EAST BERLIN, June 17, (Reuters): Chancellor Helmut Kohl said today West and East Germany have agreed on the wording of a joint parliamentary declaration guaranteeing Poland's post-war western frontier.

"We are in total agreement," Kohl said after meeting East German Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere in East Berlin following a joint session of the German parliaments to mark a 1953 anti-communist revolt in East Germany.

Kohl said he and De Maiziere discussed preparations for a co-ordinated parliamentary resolution recognising the Oder-Neisse Line as Poland's legal boundary. Its promulgation is tentatively scheduled for Thursday.

The conservative West German chancellor had earlier

refused to recognise the boundary as final until after Germany was formally unified, but he backed down following an international uproar rooted in lingering fears from World War Two.

Almost one-third of current Polish territory is former German land handed over to Warsaw after the war to compensate for Polish territory seized further to the east by Moscow.

Kohl told a meeting of his Christian Democrats in West Germany yesterday that he took issue with conservatives eager to reclaim German lands awarded to Poland after the war.

World News Roundup

Americas

Distance record: A Boeing 767 has set an unofficial world distance record for twin-engine commercial airliners by flying 9,253 miles (14,888 kms) nonstop from Seattle to Nairobi, Kenya, Boeing Commercial Airplane Group said.

The flight by a new 767-200ER was completed Sunday and lasted 18 hours, 29 minutes, Boeing said Tuesday.

The plane was on the first leg of a flight to Royal Brunei Airlines, the national carrier of Brunei, Darussalam. The country is on the island of Borneo in the Indonesian archipelago.

There were 20 passengers aboard and a flight crew of four. The aircraft, the first Boeing 767 for Royal Brunei's fleet, continued on to Brunei Monday.

Pending final verification, the National Aeronautic Association established the flight as a record, Boeing said. The previous record of 8,893 miles (14,308 kms) was also set by a 767. (AP)

Paintings scratched: A vandal put deep scratches into three paintings, including one by Manet, at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. There have been no arrests in the case.

Scratches were found in two 16th-century German works and in an 1880 painting by Manet, a French impressionist, said museum spokeswoman Lisa Austin.

The scratches were about as deep as a pen point, she said.

Three other paintings were found with faint pencil marks on them, but that marbling was not thought to have been deliberate, or even recently done.

The German works damaged Friday were "Portrait of a Bearded Man" by Lucas Cranach the younger in 1538, and "Betrothal Portrait of a Lady" a 1538 work by Barthel Bruyn the younger. Both are part of the museum's permanent collection.

A scratch was found shortly after the gallery closed Thursday in Manet's "Still Life with Broche," on loan from the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh. (AP)

Attack spurred: A cat owner whose pet was bashed to death by his friends says he may have inadvertently spurred the attack when he shouted the animal's name — "Killer".

"I yelled out, 'Killer' and I think they misunderstood what I said," said Gary Hegler, 43, of Fort Gratiot township.

Michael Wood, 34, and John Zeros, 33, were arraigned Wednesday on charges of maliciously destroying an animal belonging to someone else. The offense carries up to four years in prison. They were released on \$3,000 bond.

Hegler, who was not charged, said his two friends were at his house Friday.

"One guy was petting the cat and it scratched him. The cat was thrown and it stunned the cat," he said. "I called out her name — 'Killer' — I don't think they understood what I said." (AP)

Shara returns from Turkey: Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara returned on Saturday night from talks in Turkey on border security and the waters of the Euphrates river.

The official Syrian News Agency (Sana) said Shara "stressed the need for reaching an agreement as soon as possible to guarantee fair sharing of the Euphrates waters among Syria, Turkey and Iraq." (Reuters)

Yemenis seek confidence vote: The government of the three-week-old Yemeni republic outlined its policies to Parliament on Saturday, seeking its first vote of confidence. Prime Minister Haider Abu Bakr Al Attas read a policy statement to the legislature. Radio Sana said a committee was formed to study the programme before a vote on Tuesday. (Reuters)

Saddam, Saleh hold talks: Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his Yemeni counterpart Ali Abdullah Saleh, last night held a second round of talks on bilateral relations and latest Arab developments. Saddam has reiterated Iraq's support to the Yemeni unity saying that the unification will have positive effects on the Yemeni people. (Kuna)

Conference in support of Iraq: More than 700 Islamic figures from 70 countries started a conference in Baghdad on Saturday in support of Iraq against US and Israeli threats, Iraqi officials said. They said the three-day conference, attended by endorsement and religious affairs ministers, clergymen and other Muslims, was aimed at "drafting a unified plan to confront challenges and plots against Iraq, the Arab nation and Muslims in general." (Reuters)

Ban on nationalist party: The Algerian Supreme Court has upheld a ban on a nationalist party founded in the 1930s that turned against the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) during the 1954-62 war of independence from France.

The Party of the Algerian People (PPA), formed by Messali Al Hadj, was a pioneer in the Algerian fight for independence from French colonial rule but later fell out with the FLN. (Reuters)

Ihdayid visits Iraq: The director-general of the Jordanian security police, Fadil Ali Ihdayid, arrived in Baghdad on Saturday for talks with Iraqi officials, the Iraqi News Agency reported.

The agency gave no details of the nature of the visit, believed to centre on co-ordination of security affairs between the two neighbouring Arab states. (Reuters)

Mengistu calls on Al Bashir: Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam has asked Sudanese military leader Gen. Omar Al Bashir for a summit meeting to "discuss pending" issues between the two neighbouring countries, a senior Sudanese official said in Khartoum Sunday. Acting Foreign Minister Abdalla Mohamed



Colonel shot

An army colonel (body shown above) was shot to death Friday by members of Grapo, a shadowy Marxist organisation with no known popular support, as several of the group's leaders, on hunger strikes since November, lay near death in prison hospitals.

The victim was Manuel Lopez Munoz, 62, an aide to the military governor of Valladolid, about 100 miles (160 km) northwest of Madrid.

Witnesses said a young man walked casually out of a coffee bar, came up behind Lopez, shot him three times in the head and neck with a 9-mm pistol and disappeared down a side street with a companion.

The killing was the first since the death in prison May 24 of a Grapo leader, Jose Manuel Sevillano, the only one of more than 40 hunger-striking Grapo inmates who has died.

The group threatened to "retaliate" with other "assassinations" for Sevillano's death. In March, members of Grapo shot and killed a physician in Zaragoza who had forced to lead a Grapo hunger strike. (Reuters wirephoto)

Blood-heating

Aids patient progressing

ATLANTA, June 17, (UPI): The second Aids patient to undergo an experimental blood-heating treatment showed progress and was "doing very well" yesterday, two days after the procedure to try ridding his body of the disease, his doctor said.

Tony Mascio, 38, who underwent the hyperthermia procedure on Thursday at Atlanta hospital, was awake and reported to be feeling "better than I look" in the intensive care unit, Dr. Kenneth Alonso said.

"He is stable," Alonso said. "He is off his ventilator. He is speaking to his family. His white (blood-cell) counts are stable. Whereas at the time of his admission he had virtually no lymphocytes in his blood, he has nearly 800 now. He is doing very well."

Family members, who travelled to the small hospital with Mascio, echoed the doctor's report.

"He looks great, he is alert and he is getting better and better by the hour," said a member of Mascio's family who asked not to be identified.

Mascio, who was diagnosed with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome four years ago, came to the doctors with Aids-related tumours on his lungs, tonsils and liver, four months after the procedure appeared to have helped an Atlanta waiter with the deadly virus.

The yet-to-be-proven Aids treatment is being watched with guarded optimism in the medical community, with some physicians expressing disapproval that the method is being widely publicised before being thoroughly tested.

Ahmed was quoted by the official Sudan News Agency, Sana, as saying that Mengistu made the proposal in a message to Gen. Al Bashir which was handed to him by Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Tisfey Dinka who visited Khartoum. (Kuna)

"Subversive" article: The authorities seized the latest issue of the Tunisian Islamic fundamentalist weekly Al Fajr (dawn) because it contained an article considered subversive, its editor Hamadi Jebali said on Saturday.

He said he was also told by the Interior Ministry that the article labelled President Zine Abidine Ben Ali.

Jebali told Reuters the article was written by Rached Ghannouchi, leader of the Tunisian fundamentalist movement Nahdha. The movement is not officially authorised and Ghannouchi lives abroad. (Reuters)

Kurdish rebels, army clash: Seven soldiers and five Kurdish rebels were killed in three separate clashes in southeast Turkey on Saturday, official sources said on Sunday.

They said troops captured five insurgents and seized rifles, hand grenades and ammunition but gave no other details. (Reuters)

First visit to Soviet Union: Leaders of Israel's powerful Histadrut trade federation left on Sunday for their first visit to the Soviet Union since Moscow broke off diplomatic relations with Israel 23 years ago.

The two-week visit led by Histadrut secretary-general Yisrael Kessar was a sign of further improvement in ties severed by the Soviet Union during the 1967 Middle East war, spokesman Eliezer Mazar told. (Reuters)

Algerian film wins award: Algerian director Rachid Benhadj collected the best picture award at the sixth annual Trois Film Festival Sunday with his feature "Louise".

A jury of Portuguese journalists gave Benhadj the Golden Dolphin prize for a film telling the story of a disabled boy living with his sister in a remote Sahara desert oasis. (AP)

Klibi, League to shift Nov 1: Arab League secretary-general Chadi Klibi is to move to the new headquarters of the League in Cairo by November, according to a Qatari daily.

Al Raya, in an uncorroborated report, said that Klibi is to assume his duties at the new League headquarters on Nov 1 after the Arab League decided to return the headquarters to Cairo. (Kuna)

Chernobyl pilot critical: The condition of a Soviet helicopter pilot who helped contain the Chernobyl nuclear disaster has deteriorated following surgery for a lung infection and treatment for leukaemia and bone cancer, a Seattle hospital reported on Saturday.

Anatoly Grishchenko, 32, received a bone marrow transplant in April and has received radiation treatment for cancer.

"His condition is life-threatening. He can't breathe without a respirator," said Susan Edmonds, spokeswoman for the Fred Hutchinson cancer research centre. She said his chances of survival did "not look good." (Reuters)

Soviet MPs talk with inmates: Inmates of a jail in Soviet Ukraine where at least two prisoners died in a riot last week sat small fires on Sunday as a negotiating committee of parliamentarians heard their demands for better conditions.

"There are reinforced police patrols posted around the prison," a police spokesman said by telephone from Dnepropetrovsk. "But there is no more rioting, because of the commission's work." (Reuters)

Egg-throwing protesters: Left-wing demonstrators opposed to German unity threw eggs and firecrackers at West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl as he arrived in East Berlin on Sunday to mark an East German uprising 37 years ago.

Police behind steel barriers kept the flag-waving protesters well back from the steps of East Berlin's classical Schauspielhaus where German Unity Day, as the June 17 anniversary is known, was to be celebrated. (Reuters)

Czechoslovakia's reads pledge: Czechoslovakia's defeated Communist Party said on Saturday it would adopt a policy of constructive opposition to the new government led by the Civic Forum Movement, the state news agency CTK reported.

Efforts to wipe the party from Czechoslovakia's political map had only "united all who remained faithful to it," Jiri Machacek, a regional chairman, told a central committee meeting. (Reuters)

Francophone summit on June 26: The 16th Francophone summit, which is scheduled to begin next Tuesday in the city of La Baule, will discuss the development and the economic crisis of the African continent.

Twenty African leaders will be participating in the summit, which will be inaugurated by French President Francois Mitterrand. (Kuna)

100 feared dead: At least 100 people were feared to have died in a collapse of a secondary school in Port Harcourt, where rescuers searched for children crying in the rubble Saturday, reports said in Lagos, Nigeria.

The news agency of Nigeria gave the figure on the number feared dead, but had no count of the injured in the collapse at the private school in Port Harcourt.

More than 200 people were in the school when it collapsed, including some younger brothers and sisters of students attending the secondary school. The young children had gone to join their brothers and sisters at the end of their school day. (AP)

Dibouti condemns defection: Dibouti denounced on Sunday the defection of two of its diplomats in Washington, saying in a statement their asylum appeal had no substance as they had ignored orders to return home for investigation of disciplinary charges.

Counselor Ali Dahan and Ambassador Ali Amarak, financial attaché, said on Friday they had asked for asylum in Canada and France because of what they described as official corruption and human rights abuses in their country. (Reuters)

Moi orders end to debate: Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi, seeking to defuse what has become an increasingly violent debate on multi-party politics, Saturday ordered an end to all such discussion.

"Any further debate on multi-parties must stop with immediate effect — Kenya cannot afford to have a multi-party political system," Moi said. (UPI)

Encouraging news in human beings: said Dr David Ho, an Aids researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles.

While none of these reports is likely to suggest that a vaccine is close to being ready for widespread use, they at least should hint that such a preventative measure is possible.

"In the first five years of HIV (Aids virus) research, anything related to vaccine research has been very discouraging," said Ho. "Over the past year, we have seen a lot more positive results."

The report brought down the government of Charles Dumbur Burgess King, whose government was implicated in the slave trade.



The AWB march June 16 in the mining town of Welkom, in protest against the detention of some of their members. (Reuters wirephoto)

Soweto Day rallies

Four black policemen killed amid violence

JOHANNESBURG, June 17, (AP): Tens of thousands of blacks commemorated the 1976 Soweto uprising yesterday by staging peaceful rallies, and for the first time police for the most part did not try to disperse the demonstrators.

The rallies commemorated the 1976 Soweto student uprisings that shaped an entire generation of anti-apartheid activists. Four black policemen were killed in separate incidents during the weekend but it

was not clear if the deaths were related to observances of the uprising.

On June 16, 1976, police opened fire on black students in Soweto protesting the education policies of the white-led government. The shootings touched off a wave of unrest that spread throughout the country and lasted several months. Some 500 to 700 blacks died and thousands fled the country to join the African National Congress.

Battle for Monrovia looms as talks fail

MONROVIA, June 17, (UPI): The break-up of peace talks aimed at stopping the war in Liberia loomed very close on Saturday as the two sides failed to agree on a peaceful solution to the conflict and only the resignation of President Samuel Doe is likely to prevent a battle for Monrovia, diplomats in the capital said today.

That battle was likely to occur "sooner rather than later," according to "Western" military officials "who asked not to be identified."

Five days of talks, held in the US embassy in neighbouring Sierra Leone broke up yesterday without substantive progress between representatives of Doe's government and envoys of rebel leader Charles Taylor.

Taylor's central demand, and the reason for his invasion of Liberia, was the removal of Doe from office.

But no public program was made on the central item of the talks' agenda — the future of President Doe.

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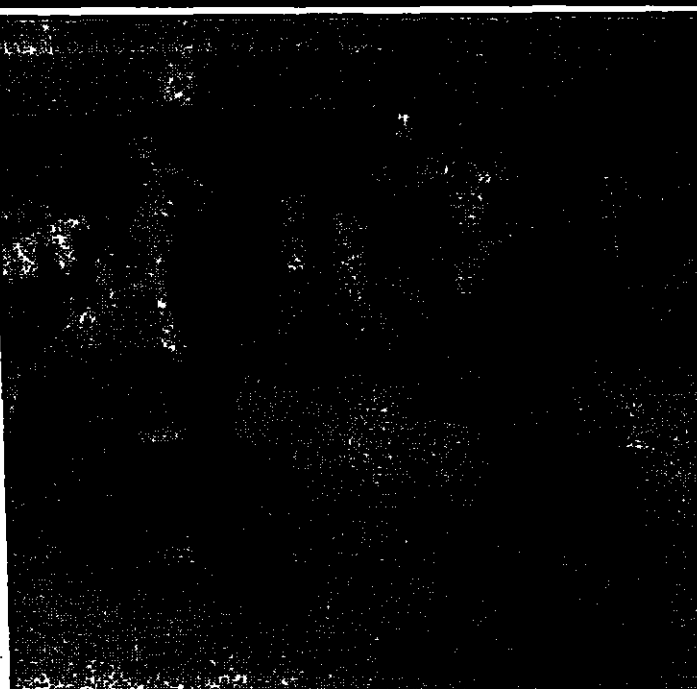
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Two boys from Nimba County, Liberia, amuse themselves while waiting for their mid-day meal at a refugee centre in Monrovia, June 16. (Reuters wirephoto)

Founders fleeing Americo-Liberians

MONROVIA, June 17, (AP): Freed American slaves who founded this West African nation brought across the Atlantic Ocean the gracious antebellum architecture and plantation mentality of their former masters.

In the land they declared a republic in 1847 and named for liberty, they adopted tailcoats and top hats despite the sweltering heat. They enriched themselves by stealing the land and labour of native Liberians, and sometimes even sold the natives into slavery.

Today, vengeance against the immigrants is surfacing after years of brutal repression.

Many of the balconied mansions with their US southern-style gables and wooden shutters are boarded up. Their owners are fleeing the country since soldiers June 9 butchered three Americo-Liberians, the name given to the descendants of the country's elitist founders.

The Americo-Liberians, an estimated 5 per cent of the nation's 2.5 million people, fear further reprisals because they are accused of supporting the man presenting the most potent challenge to President Samuel K. Doe during his 10-year presidency.

Rebel leader Charles Taylor, who began an insurgency that has escalated into tribal war, is half Americo and half native Liberian.

Some of the tight-knit group of just 300 Americo-Liberian families deny their people even exist anymore because there has been so much inter-marriage with what they used to call "aborigines."

In the old days the "bossman" Americo-Liberian would steal his workers' wives to enrich the gene pool.

Later, they adopted native ways for the same purpose.

But most Americo-Liberians have opposed Doe since he seized power in a bloody 1980 coup that ended their 133-year monopoly on power and money.

The adventurous freed men and women who came to the West African coast said they were on a civilizing mission to bring their Western knowledge back to the African continent. The flow of American blacks to Liberia continued into this century, though the vast majority had arrived before the US civil war ended in 1865.

Their showcase "democracy" initially was fêted by successive US and other Western governments, who ignored their subjugation of local tribespeople.

It ended in 1931 when a League of Nations report said young boys were being hunted like wild animals and sold into slavery. Others were forced to work for no pay and tortured if they did not, the report said 60 years ago.

The report brought down the government of Charles Dumbur Burgess King, whose government was implicated in the slave trade.

Much of this work still is at the most basic stages. Scientists will update their search, for instance, for vulnerable spots on the surface of the Aids virus that a vaccine can exploit to attack and destroy it.

Scientists will also report on the uses of AZT and experimental drugs by people who are infected with HIV but not yet sick.

The goal of such treatment is to keep them healthy, but the new studies show people quickly grow resistant to the helpful effects of the drugs.

About 20,000 blacks, most of them young, packed a Soweto stadium Saturday to observe the 14th anniversary of the uprising.

The youths of Soweto, a town great symbol of resistance and defiance throughout the world, ANC leader Walter Sisulu told the crowd.

"Fourteen years ago we mourned and complained, but today we are counting our victories," ANC spokesman Popo Molefe told tens of thousands of blacks at a rally outside the southern city of Port Elizabeth.

The ANC rally had a carnival atmosphere in line with an ANC directive that for the first time the most emotional date in the black political calendar should be used to celebrate recent victories over apartheid as well as mourning the dead.

"A surprise appearance" by black South African singing star Miriam Makeba, recently returned from 31 years in exile, brought the stomping, hooting crowd to its feet.

On the verge of tears, Makeba told the crowd: "I have been all over the world. I thought of you everywhere. I sang your song. I sang your life, because it is mine."

Dozens of other peaceful Soweto Day events were held around South Africa, most of them staged by the ANC or the rival Pan Africanist Congress.

Saturday marked the first time since the 1976 riots that widespread demonstrations have taken place on Soweto Day without major police intervention.

There were reports of violence, however.

Authorities said a black youth was fatally shot yesterday when police opened fire on a group of blacks storming a police vehicle near Stillfontein, about 160 kms (100 miles) southwest of Johannesburg.

The youths were attending a rally commemorating the Soweto uprisings.

In downtown Johannesburg, police fired tear gas at a few dozen black demonstrators, saying they did not have permission for the protest. A black journalist was taken into custody, according to witnesses.

Eritrea rebels want UN referendum

NAIROBI, June 17, (Reuters): Rebels in the Ethiopian province of Eritrea said they would not return to peace talks with the government and instead wanted the United Nations to organise a referendum on the future of the disputed territory.

But a spokesman for the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) denied that this was because they had made military gains since the last talks in November and no longer believed in a peaceful solution.

"We are interested in a peaceful solution, but we now believe a referendum is the answer," he said.

Former US president Jimmy Carter, who mediated two rounds of preliminary peace talks last year, said on Wednesday the EPLF had informed him it would not return to talks on ending the 29-year independence war.

Carter said the rebels gave no reason. But an EPLF spokesman in London said they had made it clear why they were withdrawing.

International conference on Aids to open on Wednesday

SAN FRANCISCO, June 17, (AP): For the sixth time in the short history of Aids, the top minds in the fight against the disease will gather to brief each other — and the world — about their triumphs and setbacks.

The sixth international conference on Aids, which opens Wednesday, will be a sort of Aids marathon, five days of terse reports on almost every aspect of the disease. No dramatic breakthroughs are likely to be announced, but experts say the meeting should turn up signs of progress in medicine's effort to understand and defeat the virus.

An estimated 11,000 doctors, scientists and other Aids professionals will hear 2,500 presentations. They will range from the results of experiments with new drugs and vaccines to reports on the spread of Aids from mothers to children and from prostitutes to their customers.

Such meetings are a staple of medical research, but they are not ordinarily under the media spotlight. Last month, for instance, 7,000 doctors gathered in Washington for the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the major US cancer meeting. About 100 reporters

chronicled the proceedings. Twenty-four times more Americans die of cancer than of Aids each year. But Aids is clearly different.

Organisers of the Aids meeting expect 1,800 members of the news media to attend, drawn both by the newsworthiness of Aids research and the possibility of demonstrations and other street drama in San Francisco, the city with the nation's highest Aids rate.

Some scientists might find the publicity unseemly, but many seem to relish the intense, if fleeting, attention.

"All of us recognise that we are in the business of dissemination of information, and there is simply no better forum in the world for doing that. It is unmatched," said Dr Robert M. Wachter of the University of California at San Francisco, the meeting's programme director.

Inside the Moscone convention centre, vaccine development is likely to be one of the hottest topics of discussion.

"At this meeting, you will see a lot more positive news about successes in the vaccine field, testing in chimpanzees and rhesus monkeys and perhaps some

encouraging news in human beings," said Dr David Ho, an Aids researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles.

While none of these reports is likely to suggest that a vaccine is close to being ready for widespread use, they at least should hint that such a preventative measure is possible.

"In the first five years of HIV (Aids virus) research, anything related to vaccine research has been very discouraging," said Ho. "Over the past year, we have seen a lot more positive results."

Much of this work still is at the most basic stages. Scientists will update their search, for instance, for vulnerable spots on the surface of the Aids virus that a vaccine can exploit to attack and destroy it.

Scientists will also report on the uses of AZT and experimental drugs by people who are infected with HIV but not yet sick.

The goal of such treatment is to keep them healthy, but the new studies show people quickly grow resistant to the helpful effects of the drugs.

Child votes in Algiers local polls: paper

Second time around for 5-year-old Imad, voted earlier in 89

ALGIERS, June 17, (AP): A child born in 1985 voted in local elections last week in which Algeria's rising Muslim fundamentalist party defeated the ruling National Liberation Front, the evening newspaper Horizons reported yesterday.

The Tuesday voting, the first free elections since Algeria gained independence from France in 1962, was the second time around for Imad Yaddaden. The French-language Horizons said he also voted in the February 1989 referendum which

opened the way to pluralism.

According to Horizons, Imad's father had tried to have his son's name removed from the voting list, where he was apparently mistakenly registered. Failing in his effort, he took his son to the polls with him in Al Harrach, near Algiers. Given his ballot and an envelope, Imad was sent into the booth to fulfill his citizen's duty. His father picked him up so he could place the ballot in a box, the paper said, calling Imad the world's youngest voter.

The forthright account of Imad's voting underscored criticism that the election for municipal and provincial council seats was riddled with fraud.

The Algerian League of Human Rights regretted yesterday the "irregularities and excesses which regrettably brought to light the failure of the administration in certain cases and recourse to undemocratic practices in others."

The Islamic Salvation Front won 53 of the 1,539 municipal councils at stake and

32 of 48 provincial councils. The FLN, which has ruled Algeria since its independence, carried 489 municipal councils and 14 provincial councils.

The official daily Al Moudjahid reported the fundamentalists' victory for the first time yesterday, reporting only that the Islamic Salvation Front had a majority in 55.4 per cent of the communes. It provided no editorial comment and did not carry statements by Salvation Front's leader, Abassi Madani.

Israel keeps mum on new proposals

Cabinet meets: no steps to quell uprising discussed

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, June 17, (Reuters): Israeli officials insisted today that a new right-wing government would work for Middle East peace but declined to say what alternatives it would offer to a US proposal for talks with Palestinians in Cairo.

Cabinet ministers said after their first meeting that the government had not discussed new steps to quell a 30-month-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Cabinet Secretary Eliyahu Rubinstein denied press reports he had effectively rejected the US Secretary of State James Baker's formula for

the Cairo talks when he met Baker's aides last week in Washington.

Still snarling from a public rebuke by Baker, that the Shamir government was not serious about peace, the officials sought to de-emphasise a US proposal for the talks on preparing Israeli-sponsored Palestinian elections in the occupied territories.

"The Baker proposal is really marginal in the context of the whole initiative," Health Minister Ehud Olmert, a close associate of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, said after the government's first cabinet meeting.

"Some of these procedures offered by Secretary Baker were not acceptable to the government, but we are prepared to examine other propositions in a spirit of co-operation with America, and I hope this will be done soon."

Tensions

Cabinet ministers said they did not think the tensions had eroded the traditional bonds between the Jewish state and its guardian superpower and hoped Foreign Minister David Levy would visit Washington after recovering from a minor heart attack.

Neither Olmert nor Avi Pazner, Shamir's media adviser, would comment on which alternatives Israel would consider or initiate to help bridge the gap.

"We first have to renew our dialogue with the United States and to see where we stand," Avi Pazner said. "We should be given some time to get ourselves organised."

Israeli media said Rubinstein told US officials just after the new government took office last Monday that Israel would not allow the participation of East Jerusalem Arabs or Palestinians who were expelled from the occupied territories in the preparatory talks, as demanded by Washington.

But Rubinstein told reporters: "This was not even discussed. I read this morning a lot of newspaper reports of things that never happened."

Immigration

Asked if a government dependent on far-right parties that want to annex the occupied areas could advance peace efforts better than a government that had included the dovish Labour Party, Olmert said:

"This government has the capacity to have one strong, vigorous opinion and to carry it out. And I am quite hopeful that despite what appears to some as the uncomfortable composition of participants in this cabinet, it will have under the leadership of Mr Shamir enough courage to go ahead."

An Israeli civilian patrol captured five Palestinian youths who planned to attack Jews after entering central Israel from the occupied West Bank, police said yesterday.

They said the civilians from Kibbutz Eyal, less than three km (two miles) from the West Bank town of Kalkiya, had been watching for crop saboteurs when they seized the five on Thursday night.

Former Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin said yesterday that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's recent decision to end restrictions on Jewish emigration to Israel is a "historic opportunity" and a "turning point in Israel's history."

Speaking at the Anti-defamation League of B'nai B'rith's 77th annual national commission meeting in Manhattan, Rabin said Israel has not had such an opportunity in the past 40 years "to increase the Jewish community qualitatively and quantitatively," as it has now — as the result of the new Soviet policy,

American criticism is unjust: Baghdad

BAGHDAD, June 17, (AP): The Iraqi government today branded criticism of its arms programme by US President George Bush's administration as "unjust and biased" and said Iraq has the right to defend itself.

The official Iraqi News Agency quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Nizar Hamdoun as saying that the United States does not want Iraq and the Arabs to "live in dignity and security and defend their rights and security."

Hamdoun's comments underlined a recent deterioration in relations between Iraq and the United States, mirroring a wider chill between much of the Arab world and Washington for its support of Israel.

Hamdoun was commenting on a statement by John Kelly, US Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, who said Friday that Iraq was on a collision course with the United States and the West over its drive to develop nuclear and chemical weapons.

Kelly was testifying before the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee in Washington.

The Bush administration is under growing congressional pressure to impose sanctions on President Saddam Hussein's government in Baghdad because of alleged human rights violations and its building of long-range missiles, chemical weapons and other advanced military systems.

"This is a biased and biased statement," Hamdoun declared.

He did not deny that Iraq is developing nuclear weapons, but said Kelly made his comments because "Iraq is committed to its rights and those of the Arab nation for life, security and stability."

"Iraq and the Arab nation have chosen the path of security and stability... but they also chose the path of dignity," he said.

Kelly testified that Iraq has "demonstrated a willingness to go to great lengths to develop non-conventional weapons."

But he ruled out economic sanctions against Iraq, primarily because the Bush administration does not believe they would be effective since other countries would not likely follow any US action.

Kelly noted that Washington has made its disapproval of Iraqi actions known through diplomatic channels, but said: "It is important to give the government of Iraq an opportunity to demonstrate that it can rest to reserve this deterioration in relations."

Western concern that Iraq is building up its military might heightened in recent weeks after British authorities intercepted Iraqi-bound devices that could be used for nuclear weapons triggers.

Britain, Switzerland and other countries have also seized components for what they believe to be an Iraqi "super gun" capable of firing rocket-boosted shells for hundreds of miles (kilometres).

Iran-based Afghan rebel groups unite

NICOSIA, June 17, (AP): A nine-party coalition of Shiite Muslim Afghan rebels based in Iran have united in the Islamic Unity Party, the Islamic republic news agency reported yesterday.

The official Iranian agency, mentioned in Cyprus, said the unity meeting was also attended by representatives of the Sunni Muslim Afghan rebel groups which are based in Peshawar, Pakistan.

But it gave no names of the Pakistani groups or representatives present.

Hojatollah Hussein Ibrahim, representative of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, told the Afghan rebel leaders, "I hope that the formation of the party will help unification of all the Shiite and Sunni forces in Afghanistan," Irma said.

Everything in short supply

Refugees wait

AWEIL, Sudan, June 17, (AP): Aweil is a place where everything is in desperately short supply. Food, money, medicine, hope.

Especially hope, when survival can depend on whether the train from Muglad arrives.

As recently as December, 4,750 families waited in Aweil's refugee camp — about 30,000 people driven into the town by a seemingly endless civil war. Since then, despair has driven most of them back to the countryside, to the risk of death from war, lawlessness or famine.

Only a few hundred women, children and old men are in the camps now.

"Most of the families who left had been waiting for six to seven months for the relief train," said Mohamed Ali of the local relief committee. "They saw no ray of hope so they moved out to the villages, where they might find something to eat."

There is food at Muglad, a relief-distribution centre 160 miles (260 kilometres) north of Aweil at the northern terminus of a rail line. Goods shipped from Khartoum, the capital 450 miles (725 kilometres) to the northeast, are stockpiled there under Operation Lifeline-Sudan, a relief programme co-ordinated by the United Nations.

Operation Lifeline was created after the famine of 1988, which took between 250,000 and 500,000 lives and resulted from a civil war that has raged in the southern part of Africa's largest nation since 1983.

Black rebels in the south, which is predominantly Christian and animist, demand greater autonomy from the Arab, Muslim north.

The relief project was credited with preventing a recurrence of the 1988 disaster last year, but getting supplies into the area has been difficult.

Trains often are weeks or months late in making the 160-mile (260-kilometre) journey from Muglad to Aweil. Reasons range from the dilapidated track and the danger of land mines or attacks by rebels, renegade soldiers or bandits to bad weather, bureaucracy, inadequate equipment and the reluctance of crews to risk the trip.

At the end of May, a 150-car train with 1,500 tons of grain had been waiting at Muglad for six months.

"We have only 400 gallons (1,500 litres) of edible oil and nothing else," said the Rev. Akili Malweth, the local Roman Catholic bishop. "Our stores are as empty as a hungry man's stomach."

Four trains have brought supplies to Aweil since operation Lifeline began in 1989. On the return trip north, each carried thousands of people trying to escape and survive.

"Those who could not move out of the town are the poor, the old, the tuberculosis victims and the children," said Mohammed Ali, who also is the local representative of the Sudanese Commission on Relief and Rehabilitation.

Nearly all those remaining are women, children and old men. They are housed in two makeshift camps, and few have money to buy anything.

One camp has nine large huts that accommodate 20 families each, and the other is in the town's school building. Alino Kolong, Aweil's education commissioner, said those who lived in the school cleaned it each morning before classes began.

The women, and many of the children, try to find work. Refugee women till people's gardens and carry firewood and water from the centre of town to outlying houses in Aweil, which has a normal population of 11,000.

Women here work in all sorts of jobs," said Majack Khawaja, a resident of the town. "Even building houses, which traditionally has been a man's job, is now being done by women."

Even if the refugee women can find work, they seldom make enough money to buy food.

A cup of tea costs 10 Sudanese pounds, nearly 85 cents, double the daily wage for the best-paying jobs available.

"They cannot afford to buy one sack of sorghum at the unimagined price of 900 pounds," or \$75, for the 88-pound (40-kilogramme) bag, Kolong said.

UK, Syria in secret talks

Bid to restore ties

LONDON, June 17, (Reuters): Syrian and British officials have met secretly in New York to discuss possible restoration of diplomatic ties cut more than three years ago after London accused Damascus of links with terrorists, a leading Arab newspaper said today.

The London-based Asharq Al Awsat said in a front page report the meeting would prepare for talks at a higher level in a bid to improve relations.

Britain cut ties with Syria in 1986 after accusing Damascus of involvement in an attempt to blow up an Israeli airliner in London.

The newspaper said British overtures towards Damascus were linked to London's awareness of Syria's role in the recent release of an American hostage held by pro-Iranian kidnappers in Lebanon.

It said some British parliamentarians met in London last week with senior members of the Syrian community at a reception hosted by a Syrian businessman.

The two sides discussed a possible visit by British members of Parliament to the Syrian capital to pave the way for full restoration of ties, it added.

Parliamentarian Robert Adley indicated that such a visit could take place in the autumn, the paper said. Adley told a questioner he believed it would be

approved by the government.

Adley was quoted as saying that many members of Parliament felt Britain could not boost its influence in the Middle East without ties with Syria.

The Observer newspaper said the meeting was first proposed by Britain a month ago and is expected to be followed by further high-level meetings.

Britain, is hoping Damascus will use its influence with Tehran and Lebanon's pro-Iranian groups to speed the release of the UK hostages "as a first step to the possible re-establishment of relations," the paper added.

The British foreign office today declined to confirm the meeting.

At least one British hostage could be freed if the British government expels author Salman Rushdie, accused by Iran of blaspheming Islam, a pro-Iranian religious leader said yesterday.

At the same time, Al Shira'a, a weekly Lebanese magazine connected to Syrian and Shiite fundamentalist circles, said in a brief report the issue of the British hostages has been revived as the result of moves and contacts by London's mission in Beirut.

The report said Britain was making efforts to free its four nationals held in secret hideouts in Lebanon.

Plight of Sudan's civil war orphans

AWEIL, Sudan, June 17, (AP): Relief workers call the two mud-and-grass huts a feeding centre, but for 150 Sudanese war orphans, the food supply is increasingly tenuous.

The children, whose parents and relatives were among hundreds of thousands of civilian victims of civil war and famine, live with other refugee women, children and old men at Aweil, in the embattled Bahr El Ghazal region of southern Sudan.

Each orphan has a tag attached to an arm of leg showing when he or she entered the centre and detailing his or her medical care. Each has been given a name, a nurse said, because "everybody has to have a name, you know."

All the children are members of the dominant southern Dinka tribe. They have nothing outside the feeding centre's two crude huts, and inside they sleep on the ear floor.

They are still getting food — cookies, high-protein gravel and milk provided by the Roman Catholic charity Sudanaid and most are in relatively good health.

Considering the limited expectations of Aweil's children, that makes the orphans of the feeding centre luckier than many of their famished playmates, at least for now.

The Rev. Akili Malweth, the local Catholic Bishop, said the centre's food was being exhausted rapidly, and "after that, we will be at the mercy of the rain."

His reference was to a relief train that had been waiting for six months in Muglad, 260 kms (160 miles) away, to bring 1,500 tons of grain.

Caretakers like Bishop Malweth try to maintain a semblance of normality for the children of Aweil's camps, but it is difficult. Alino Kolong, the town's education commissioner, said fewer children were attending school.

"No all families can afford to buy school materials, and many of the children here are orphans," he said.

A pencil costs 10 pounds, or 85 US cents, and a notebook costs 25 Sudanese pounds, about 2 dollars. Together, that is more than a week's wages for a refugee lucky enough to find work.

Many pupils also stay away from school because "some of the families cannot afford to buy clothes for the children," Kolong said, and "we can't leave a naked child in the classroom with the others."

Aweil has a hospital and a doctor. The hospital has only 75 beds, and often is nearly empty because many Dinka people prefer their doctors.

"Sometimes a child is brought here and we hospitalise it," Dr Samuel Deng said. "After 10 to 12 hours we discover that the child has vanished," taken to a traditional healer by its mother.

Most of those children die, he said.

Victory over rebels

KHARTOUM, June 17, (AP): The military government today said it killed large numbers of rebels in three victorious battles in south Sudan.

A statement by the armed forces general command said "great numbers" of rebels were killed when government troops overran a camp of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army in the southern Bahr El-Ghazal region.

The statement said the battle took place in Fayang area near Bentu, 760 km (475 miles) southwest of the capital Khartoum. It said 39 army troops were killed in the battle. It also said large amounts of weapons and ammunition were seized.

The general command statement also reported two battles in the southern Upper Nile region. It said it destroyed an SPLA camp, inflicting "heavy losses" on the insurgents.

The other incident took place when rebels ambushed an army unit in the same region. The army forces launched a successful counter-attack.

The army statement did not mention when the incidents took place, nor did it give further details.

Israel cuts water flow

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, June 17, (Reuters): Palestinians in a Jerusalem refugee camp who refuse to pay water bills said today they feared outbreaks of disease after the city council refused to supply water for free.

Shops and businesses throughout the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip were closed in response to a strike call by the Islamic fundamentalist movement Hamas, residents said. Transport was still running to let schoolchildren sit exams.

Jemal Awad, 32, director of the Shuafat refugee camp, told Reuters many homes in the camp were without running water following the council's reduction in supplies five days ago.

"We will not pay one shekel to the Israeli occupation authorities," Awad said. "We have not paid for water since the camp was established in 1966. Why should we start now?"

The municipality took the step to force payment of 18 months in bills which the camp refuses to pay for political reasons.

Children queued with bucket in summer heat today at two communal taps. Camp residents said they had enough water only for drinking and could not flush toilets or wash regularly.

"No one has fallen yet, but we fear it is only a matter of time," said Awad, who gave the camp's population as 8,000.

A spokesman for the UN Palestinian relief agency said it was concerned about hygiene.

Jerusalem municipality spokeswoman Bonnie Boxer said the city council had cut supplies by about half as a punitive measure after 18 months of fruitless negotiations on payment.

"We all hope this step will bring negotiations to a close as soon as possible," she said. "Obviously we don't enjoy doing this but nobody can expect to get water for free."

The Observer newspaper said that water supplies to the Palestinian village of lower Jiftlik were cut last Tuesday and had not been restored by the weekend.

Women and children from the village are forced to make dawn forays to get their water from the fields of the neighbouring Israeli settlement, the paper said.

Israeli Abie Nathan, who has travelled the world to talk peace with Arab leaders and has been jailed for it, celebrated the 17th anniversary of his floating radio station the Voice of Peace today.

A ranking Palestinian official has predicted that Israel is going to launch a new war on Arab countries, and Jordan in particular, but stressed that Israel "will not get out safe from this war."

In an interview with daily "Al Seyassah" newspaper, head of the PLO political department Farouq Kaddoumi said Israel is continuing its threats to the Arab countries.

None from Arabs

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's office received many telephone calls on Sunday voicing hopes for Middle East peace but none from Arab leaders who were invited to call.

A receptionist said Shamir's new cabinet, meeting for the first time, received dozens of congratulatory calls and several callers appealed for peace, but a spokeswoman said none came from Arab states.

Israeli Justice Minister Dan Meridor invited Arab countries on Saturday to call the prime minister's office at "Jerusalem 705555" to show they wanted peace.

Army radio broadcast the appeal after US Secretary of State James Baker publicly gave out the White House phone number — 1-202-456-1414 — and told Israel: "When you're serious about peace, call us."

Sfeir appeals to lay down arms

Give Vatican plan a chance

BEIRUT, June 17, (Reuters): Lebanon's Christian Maronite Patriarch appealed today to the country's fighters to lay down their arms and give a Vatican peace plan a chance.

"We call today on all those carrying arms all over Lebanon to throw them aside and to resort to reason in response to peace efforts exerted by the Vatican," Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir told worshippers in Christian east Beirut.

Sfeir backed the Vatican plan to end inter-Christian strife and the 15-year civil war but official sources said it had failed. Fresh fighting was reported today between rival Palestinian groups in a refugee camp in southern Lebanon.

The plan was presented to Lebanon's warring groups by Papal Nuncio Pablo Puente.

The sources said the Syrian-backed government of President Elias Hiriawi had decided to reject the initiative and would inform Puente when they meet in Muslim west Beirut tomorrow.

Puente announced a ceasefire on May 26 between rival Christian forces loyal to General Michel Aoun and Samir Geagea, leader of the Lebanese Forces (LF) militia, hoping to end four months of fighting in which at least 1,080 people were killed.

But the ceasefire is breached every night along frontlines in the Christian enclave. People fear full-scale battles might flare again if a political solution is not reached soon.

The sources said the Vatican plan envisages Aoun and Geagea joining Hiriawi's cabinet which would reconsider an Arab-brokered peace accord and revise proposed political reforms.

Shiite Muslim leader Nabih Berri, a minister in Hiriawi's cabinet, said Aoun or one of his representatives should join the government and fight the Arab accord from within the cabinet.

Aoun rejected the Arab agreement and refuses to recognise Hiriawi. Geagea recognises Hiriawi but says some aspects of the Arab peace accord should be renegotiated.

Pro-Syrian army rebuilding forces despite equipment shortages, threats from Aoun

BEIRUT, June 17, (UPI): Lebanon's pro-Syrian army has started rebuilding its forces despite equipment shortages and threats from rebel leader Michel Aoun, ranking military sources said.

Under the leadership of Gen Emile Lahoud, army officers in southern Beirut are running a training programme for hundreds of enthusiastic youths recruited from across the war-ravaged country.

The young Lebanese, gathered at a poorly equipped camp near Beirut airport, received daily dawn-to-dusk intensive training. They grapple ropes attached to pine trees, jog noisily along the sand dunes

and learn to handle automatic weapons.

Senior officers close to Lahoud, 54, who was appointed commander of the Lebanese Army by the pro-Syrian cabinet, said the general was seeking to create a 3,000-strong group to "add new blood" to the regular force.

"There are 1,000 volunteers under training at several camps," said a high-ranking military official who requested anonymity. "In two months we will start training 2,000 others."

Lahoud, a highly educated Maronite Christian, was appointed to head the army by the government

of pro-Syrian President Elias Hiriawi last October following an internationally backed peace agreement worked out in Taif, Saudi Arabia.

Aoun, also a Maronite, has attacked the Taif agreement for failing to ensure a speedy and complete withdrawal of Syria's 35,000 troops from Lebanon. He also has refused to recognise Hiriawi as president.

Lahoud had a falling-out with Aoun when the rebel general launched a wide military campaign last year to force Syria to pull its forces, according to ranking military sources.

While Lahoud has been keen on rebuilding the army, the United States, as the army's chief arms supplier, has been hesitant to send in more military equipment.

Military sources said Syria recently delivered 5,000 Soviet-made AK-47 rifles to Lahoud's army at the general's request.

"Shortly after I was appointed, American Ambassador in Damascus Edward Djerejian sent me a message saying how can we help?" Lahoud said.

12,470 new residence permits issued in May

21,700 visit visas

THE Immigration Department at the Interior Ministry issued last month 12,470 new residence permits to expatriates and cancelled at the same time 9,817 residences. In a press release issued by the public relations department at the ministry it was announced that the four immigration departments in the various governorates also renewed over 30,000 residences.

Among other applications the departments completed during the month of May was transferring the sponsorship of 6,426 labourers, issuing 1,702 temporary residences, opening 1,661 files for new sponsors and also issued 9,822 work permits.

The release added that of the work permits issued, the majority went to maids

and domestics with 7,951 followed by labourers in the private sector with 1,304 permits, 742 family permits and 95 government work permits.

Visit visas

The four governorates also issued over 21,700 visit visas, a remarkable increase over previous months. Most of these were

family visit visas, about 12,700, and the remaining were business visas, over 9,000. The immigration department also issued 1,246 permits allowing expatriates to stay for over six months outside Kuwait. Expatriates who stay for over six months outside Kuwait without giving a good reason or without obtaining prior permission, will get their residences cancelled.

Council to fill legislative vacuum

BEIRUT, June 17, (Kuna): Kuwait's Information Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al Hamad has underscored that the newly elected National Council would fill a specific legislative vacuum, indicating it was not a substitute for the National Assembly, dissolved in 1986.

In an interview with the Lebanese Magazine Al Sayyad, the Kuwaiti minister said the 75-seat interim four year National Council is a prelude to the national assembly.

Sheikh Jaber said there was no opposition with the full meaning of the word in Kuwait, explaining that "some sons of this country have different viewpoints."

"And as they want their viewpoint to be respected they have to set an example themselves by respecting the viewpoint of the others who are the majority and this is the simplest rule of democracy," Sheikh Jaber said.

Sheikh Jaber added that difference of opinions is a healthy phenomenon and not an alien one in Kuwait, citing controversy in diwanis or public saloons where Kuwaiti men gather at the evenings to chat and discuss political or social affairs.

"The system needs this phenomenon. It needs to hear all opinions candidly and without any fears," Sheikh Jaber added.

"The parliament is a diwaniya where opinions are discussed... some may accept and other may reject but the word remains for the majority and the country's higher interests remain above any consideration," added Sheikh Jaber.

Asked on whether Kuwait would take punitive measures against news organisations which attempt to insult Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber did not rule out such a measure if they continued to distort facts and magnify events.

"We will give all a chance but this does not mean that some of the news media are not biased. We don't want them to be biased but we presume that they should be neutral," the Kuwaiti information minister said.

Information discussions

MUSCAT, June 17, (Kuna): Egyptian, Omani and Bahraini ministers of information discussed means of benefiting from the Arab satellite in the interest of the Arab nation and co-operation between their three countries in the information field.

This came during the meeting of the three ministers. Egypt's Safwat Al Shareef, Oman's Abdul Aziz Al Rawas Al Rawas and Bahrain's Tarek Al Muayed here last night.

The three officials also agreed on forming a working group to prepare a joint paper on developments in the field of television on-air transmission.

The paper, they agreed, will be submitted to the next Arab information ministers' meeting.

The Egyptian minister arrived in Oman on Saturday as part of a tour that includes Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.

He said that his visit to Oman comes at the invitation of his Omani counterpart and within the framework of the convocation of the joint information committee between the two countries.



80th Infantry visited

Upon directives from the Minister of Defence, Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmed Al Jaber, Sheikh Sabah Al Nasser visited the 80th Mechanical Infantry of the Kuwait Army. Sheikh Sabah was escorted by the director of the Engineering Affairs Department, Fahad Al Jaleel.

director of the infantry operation Col Fahad Al Mhania and a number of army officers. After the visit, Sheikh Sabah held a meeting with all workers at northern centres in the country.

Merchants accuse co-op union of gross malpractice

Pricing committee to reign

THE co-operative movement in Kuwait particularly co-operative societies and the Consumer Co-operative Societies Union was the focus of accusations directed by many merchants and food manufacturers during the fourth meeting which was held recently. The continuous control over the union by the prices committee had curtailed their malpractices, sources said.

The fourth diwaniya meeting was attended by over 70 foodstuff companies representing 90 per cent of merchants in the local market. They jointly demanded more freedom from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry the only authority representing the co-operative movement in the country. They said that freedom of trade will result in stronger competition in the market.

One of the merchants at the meeting indicated that the availability of goods in the market will ensure a more stable price in the market adding that competition is evidently to the benefit of consumers, merchants and manufacturers and will also be of greater interest to the co-operative movement in the country.

Relations

Head of the Foodstuff Merchants and Manufacturers Union, Abdullah Al Baijan pointed out that every effort has been exerted by the committee members towards strengthening relations with Kuwait Municipality and the Consumers Co-operative Societies Union.

He stated that a meeting was held with the head of the union who extended great understanding to all problems. He indicated a committee formed by the union will study the possibility of forming a new pricing committee at the union.

He said that they hope that the study will address the interest of union members regarding the free of charge goods issue. The union head promised to take strong measures to prevent this phenomenon.

Pricing

Baijan pointed out that communications were carried out with the Merchants Union and the Commerce and Industry Chamber regarding a letter raised to the governor of Kuwait Central Bank in order to release restrictions imposed by co-operative societies upon merchants and food producers. The letter suggested that measures should be taken to bring back freedom to merchants and food companies in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the pricing committee at Kuwait's Co-operative Societies Union, Fad-

hel Al Mutawa was quoted as saying that all consumer goods must be priced by the committee.

Speaking to a local daily, the official said that all merchants will be called upon to submit evidence to prove the cost of the goods on the basis of which the committee will unify the prices of such commodities at all co-operatives.

This step is intended to curtail abnormal profits presently being made by the co-operative societies. This will put an end to the practice of the past which permitted co-operative societies to unilaterally define the prices of consumer goods in supermarkets.

This move has received unanimous backing of the public and this has prompted the union to currently undertake the possibility of conducting collective purchasing deals on behalf of the co-operative societies. This will facilitate obtaining quality goods at optimum prices and discontinue the malpractice of complementary goods which negatively affects both co-operative societies and the consumers.

The union obtains prices of commodities from world-wide sources and concludes contracts with suppliers valid for a period of one year.

Committee

Meanwhile, the official said that the union had recently set up a committee entitled "Prices Development Committee" which groups representatives from the union, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kuwait University and a number of general managers at co-ops.

The committee's functions are to upgrade and modernise the policy of the pricing committee and to present its report to the board of directors of the union within one month. The report will include measures to be followed by the pricing committee which should be based on ensuring consumer protection.

The official said that the union is currently involved in undertaking a comprehensive study to overcome obstacles impeding the co-operative movement in the country. He added that the committee had recently requested co-operative societies to abide by the resolutions and circulars adopted by the union.

The dramatic changes that took place in socialist countries coupled with the withdrawals of subsidies on some consumer goods in some East European countries had led to the current price hike and the pricing committee at the union could not be held accountable for this increase, Mutawa said.

Collins leaves for Cairo

KUWAIT, June 17, (Kuna): Irish Foreign Minister and current EEC chairman, Gerard Collins, left here today heading for Cairo on a one-day official visit.

During his two-day stay here, Collins met with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Salem Al Sabah.

Collins also held talks with Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Sabah, Minister of Oil Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa Al Athbi and Minister of Higher Education, Dr Ali Al Shamlan.

Talks between Collins and the officials centred on bilateral relations, the Arab-European dialogue, the Middle East problem and the Palestinian question.

The Soviet Jewish exodus to occupied Palestine and the situation in Lebanon were also tackled.

The Irish top diplomat was seen off at the airport by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Saoud Mohammed Al Omsaimi, acting Foreign Ministry under-secretary Faisal Al Mutawa and the Irish Ambassador to Kuwait.

Electricity network maintained

DIRECTOR of the Electrical Distribution Networks Department at the Ministry of Electricity and Water, Engineer Jassem Jamal said the maintenance works for equipment at main and secondary transformation stations are carried out during the lowest electrical pressures on networks as of mid-October until the end of April each year.

He added that other equipment at the ministry facilities should be constantly maintained and tested regularly. He pointed out that consumers are not affected with most maintenance works carried out by the ministry. All works are conducted without cutting off electrical power unless work is carried out on low and intermediate pressure networks. In these cases electrical cutouts last 4-5 hours at the most.

He stated that one of the primary difficulties faced is the shortage in the number of technicians at the ministry, which takes years to be solved.

Teachers angry with shortened vacations

Students also affected

TEACHERS at the Ministry of Education strongly slammed the officials for extending the scholastic year this year for over two weeks. Interviewed by the magazine of the Kuwaiti Teachers Association "Al Muallem" (The Teacher), a number of teachers blamed the ministry for undermining their rights of having a full summer vacations of three months. The Ministry of Education has for the first time this year extended the duration of the scholastic year by over 2 weeks. Teachers of primary schools and kindergartens went on summer vacation on June 13, teachers of intermediate schools start their vacation on June 20 while secondary teachers will have to wait till June 28 to begin their summer holidays. In previous years, all government teachers summer vacations started before June 10.

Deprivation

Most years, the summer vacation started in the first few days of June and teachers resumed work in the beginning of September. This year, though the vacation started over two weeks late, teachers are required to resume duty on September 1, thus cutting down the summer vacations from the customary 3 months to just about 2 months.

Teachers said that the extension of the scholastic year has resulted in many adverse effects on both teachers and students. Psychological pressure and working under difficult conditions in hot weather made teachers feel deprived of some of their legitimate rights. The teachers expressed regret that the ministry has been looking at the teaching job exactly like any other job.

"We have been looked at by ministry officials as simple employees" teachers said in anger. The extension of the scholastic year was linked to the airconditioning of the schools. The airconditioning project was completed in primary schools last year and is going to be completed in intermediate and secondary school this year. Teachers said that airconditioning of schools is not a reason to extend the academic year because only classrooms are airconditioned and the temperatures during the month of June begin soaring. This will be also against the interests of students as well, the teachers stressed.

Advantage

Principals of schools complained that extension of the academic year greatly affects the examination programmes with

the view that many Kuwaiti teachers go for their annual military recruitment. The teachers said that although the academic year has been extended the syllabus has remained the same. So, the teachers said, the cause of extending the year was not to complete an "uncompleted" syllabus or to increase illustrations for students. They added that the Ministry of Education has been reducing the summer vacation gradually year after year and now it has become only 2 months. Previously the summer vacations were for 3 months. The teachers emphasised that the work nature of teachers differs greatly from the rest of the government employees and their only benefits were the three months summer holidays they were getting. Now even this benefit has been taken away. The teachers warned that if the ministry policy continues this way, many teachers, particularly Kuwaitis, will opt out of this profession.

The teachers said that studying under the scorching heat of the sun in the desert is harmful for students even if the classes are air-conditioned. Some teachers said that the productivity of teachers will be greatly affected along with the performance of students in their examinations.



Paaet training course

A proctorship training course, organised by the Vocational Development Centre of Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (Paaet), was concluded here yesterday. The conclusion ceremony was attended by the director-general of the authority Dr Abdurahman Al Muhallan and the director of the centre Dr Ahmed Bu Zabar.

The training course was attended by 18 participants from the teaching staff of Paaet and its centres. Pictures show Mulallan with the graduates.

GCC culture meeting

MUSCAT, June 17, (Kuna): Secretary-general of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters in Kuwait Dr Farouk Al Omar arrived here yesterday to represent Kuwait at the third meeting for Gulf ministers responsible for cultural affairs.

The meeting which will be held tomorrow, will discuss several points on its agenda including ways of bolstering cultural co-operation among the six states of the Gulf Co-operation Council.

Dr Omar is accompanied by a delegation comprising director of Culture and Arts Department at the council Abdelaziz Al Surai'e and head of the Foreign Cultural Relations Mansour Al Shalhali.

Khalifa for France

MANAMA, June 17, (Kuna): Defence Minister and Deputy General Commander of Bahrain's Defence Force Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Khalifa is to visit France in the coming few days, Gulf News Agency reported yesterday.

The agency said that Khalifa, who is visiting Paris at the invitation of his French counterpart Jean Pierre Chevenement, is to discuss means of enhancing co-operation between the two countries especially in military fields.

It said that a number of senior army officers will accompany Sheikh Khalifa on his visit, duration of which was not announced.

Sweedan in Iran

MUSCAT, June 17, (Kuna): Oman's Minister of Post, Cable and Telephones Ahmad Bin Sweedan Al Bhusni and the accompanying delegation left here today for an official visit to Iran.

Sweedan told Omani News Agency that the visit comes at the invitation of Iranian minister of post and communications. He added that he will discuss with his Iranian counterpart means of co-ordinating co-operation in the field of communications and telecommunications between the two countries.

Omani letter to Iran

NICOSIA, June 17, (Reuters): Oman's Minister for Foreign Affairs has sent a letter to Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, the official Omani News Agency reported yesterday.

Oman maintained good relations with Iran when other Gulf Arab states supported Iraq in the 1980-88 Gulf war. Its partners in the six-nation Gulf Co-operation Council asked it in December to act as a peacemaker in Arab-Iranian disputes.

The news agency report, received in Cyprus, said Youssef Bin Alwi Abdullah's letter was delivered by Oman's ambassador in Tehran on Thursday. It gave no further details.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia was quoted in a Saudi newspaper on Thursday as saying he wanted to end disputes between Riyadh and Tehran.

Iran showed interest last month in approaches from Iraq, which include proposals for a heads-of-state meeting to restart peace talks.

Subhi in Qatar

MUSCAT, June 17, (Kuna): Secretary-general of the conferences, higher committee Ibrahim Hamoud Al Subhi, left for Qatar yesterday to deliver a message from Sultan Qaboos Bin Saied of Oman to Qatar's Crown Prince and Minister of Defence Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani concerning bilateral relations.

Subhi told the official Omani News Agency that the message comes in the framework of continuous co-ordination and negotiations between the two countries.

He added that the message also deals with bilateral issues of common interest.

Emirates launches flight to Singapore

SINGAPORE, June 17, (Kuna): Emirates Airlines of the United Arab Emirates today launched its inaugural service to Singapore when its flight EK-648 touched down at Changi International Airport here.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore announced that Emirates will operate two weekly services to Singapore on the Dubai-Colombo-Singapore route, using A310-300 aircraft.

The flights will arrive here on Sundays and Thursdays at 4.55 pm and depart on the same day at 11.55 pm.

Emirates is the third scheduled airline company from the Middle East to fly to Singapore. Saudi Arabia and Jordan's Royal Jordanian are the other two.

Singapore and the UAE concluded an air services agreement on March 17, 1987. The republic now has agreements with 11 countries in the Middle East.

Apart from the UAE, the others are Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the Yemen Republic.

The latest air service means that Singapore is now linked by scheduled airlines to 110 cities in 54 countries through 1,786 weekly flights.

Warning

THE Ministry of Interior has warned parents from allowing their children to sell paper tissues and other articles at traffic lights on major crossroads. In a press release issued yesterday the ministry said that these kids endanger their lives and the safety of drivers by selling various articles on traffic lights. The ministry described such behaviour as "uncivilised" and warned that it will subject the children to legal action.

Recreational facilities too expensive: citizens

A NUMBER of citizens interviewed by a local daily to speak about the quality of services offered by the Touristic Enterprises Company said that the charges of company utilities are very high and require reconsideration. They added that the objective of establishing these facilities and services should be directed towards serving citizens instead of focussing on securing large profits. They hoped that officials at the Entertainment City, Doha cancel the comprehensive ticket system due to the fact that it has many negative sides. Other citizens stressed that in order to obtain a reservation at Khairan chalets, which are expensive, they need "wasta."

They added that these services are under the required level regarding cleanliness and maintenance. They demanded establishing further touristic projects similar to the Entertainment City at other governorates particularly Alhamdi and Jahra. They stressed on the importance of developing innovation in the tourist industry.

On the other hand, they praised touristic utilities, particularly the Entertainment City. They indicated that the touristic industry in Kuwait is constantly developing and prospering during the past few years.

Mansour Ali said that the tourism company provides citizens with good services via its utilities which are spread all over the country. He particularly praised the Entertainment City in Doha which has played a

great recreational role. He hoped that officials will reconsider establishing more than one entertainment city at most Kuwait governorates.

Umm Salah said utilities were very expensive particularly the price of the comprehensive ticket for those accompanying their families at the Entertainment City. She hoped that the company will cancel this system due to the fact that some may be interested in entering the entertainment city without using any of the games available there.

She added that such high prices has lowered public interest towards using such available facilities particularly Khairan chalets. She called upon officials to lower the prices of these utilities at least during the summer season for those who are unable to travel abroad.

Ala Fahad stated that tourism in Kuwait features constant development but he added that still the touristic industry in Kuwait requires developments and more inventions. He gave an example on the entertainment city indicating that games over there have not been changed since its establishment.

Hamad Al Otaibi stressed the importance of recreation in our contemporary lives. He added that the company should fully make use of all Kuwaiti islands particularly Failaka which so far has not been put to an ideal use.

Ibrahim Bouri stated that most youths face the problem of not being allowed to enter recreational utilities. He added that most youths feel unwanted at such utilities.

EDITORIALS

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

GOD bears with the wicked, but not forever — Miguel de Cervantes, Spanish writer (1547-1616).

Workers pose dilemma

Romanian govt faces difficulty

BUCHAREST, (AP): Vasile, a chief engineer at the state-run Republica pipe factory, is watching his step these days. He would like to crack down on his workers, who have been slacking off since the overthrow of communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu last December.

But he doesn't dare. "If I punished them for not working hard, tomorrow they would ask me to leave the factory," he said, pointing to a group of workers smoking at an outdoor picnic table.

Vasile's dilemma is one piece of a problem faced by Romania's newly elected government. It has inherited one of Eastern Europe's most inefficient economies. But it cannot radically change the system without risking the loss of a key group of supporters — blue-collar workers.

Benefited

Such workers, who make up about 40 per cent of Romania's labour force, have benefited greatly from the anti-communist uprising. Caught up in the revolutionary fervour last December, they held strikes at factories across the country to force the ouster of top communist managers. Then, in an exhilarating taste of freedom, they elected their new bosses.

"Of course they are nicer to us," said Alexandru, 25, a laminator at the Republica plant, who like others gave only his first name. "Because if they aren't, we might fire them."

The National Salvation Front, which took power after the revolution, quickly solidified its support by reaching out to blue-collar workers.

It increased pay and vacation time and established a five-day work week, instead of the six- or seven-day week common under Ceausescu. In the recent election campaign, it promised to move gradually toward a free-market economy and to avoid the painful unemployment expected in other East European countries.

The Front and its presidential candidate, Ion Iliescu, were rewarded with big wins in the May 20 elections.

Now they have to figure out how to make their industry more competitive without losing their legitimacy with workers.

"It is a challenging job," admits Eugen Dimarescu, a economic adviser to the interim government who is expected to emerge as a key planner in the new administration.

Under communist rule, Romania was converted from an agricultural to an industrial nation. Its economy has suffered problems typical of Eastern European nations: low-quality production, an overemphasis on unprofitable heavy industries and inefficiency due to central planning.

Obsolete

But its equipment is even more obsolete than its neighbours' since Ceausescu slashed imports in the past decade to pay off the country's foreign debt.

Since the revolution, the economy has deteriorated further. The hard-currency trade balance has plunged from a \$2.5 billion surplus in 1989 to a deficit of \$400 million by April, according to government figures. The reason is government imports of consumer goods.

Meanwhile, industrial production is down nearly 20 per cent for the first four months of 1990 compared with the same period last year, government figures say.

This drop is due to several factors, including the closing of some unprofitable plants and the reallocation of resources such as electricity from factories to homes.

Factory managers say it is also due to workers' feeling free of past constraints to work.

"This is how they view democracy," commented Vasile. "Everyone does what he wants but still gets full pay."

Stuart Dunley, senior executive of the English firm Rindalbourne Ltd, which buys textiles from a dozen Romanian factories, noted many plants had eliminated the unpopular overnight shift since the revolution.

Working hours

Combined with the cut in working hours, "the effect on production is rather dramatic," he said.

Dimarescu, the economic adviser to the government, said the new government would likely end some of the salary benefits it recently had given workers.

He said the government planned to form stock-issuing companies in all industries except electricity, gas production, oil and railways. The shares initially will be owned by the government but will gradually be sold to private investors, he said. He added that Romania would also likely borrow money from abroad.

The managing boards of factories will be allowed to set wages and the level of private ownership, he said. If they cannot make a profit, they will be allowed to go bankrupt.

"If you put the companies in such a position, they (workers) will be interested in making changes," he said.

Some say the Front might never carry out its privatization plan because it is divided between young technocrats who favour broad economic changes and former communists who oppose them. There is also the added resistance of blue-collar workers.

At the Republica pipe plant, the workers taking a coffee break said they were not worried about economic change.

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1757 — Holy Roman Empire forces defeat Prussia's King Frederick II at Kollin, Czechoslovakia, and he loses 13,000 of his 33,000 troops.
- 1779 — French forces take St Vincent in West Indies.
- 1812 — United States declares war against Britain.
- 1815 — British under Duke of Wellington, and Prussians under Gerhard von Blucher defeat France's Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo.
- 1823 — King John VI annuls Portuguese constitution of 1822 after uprising against his rule and the loss of Brazil.
- 1881 — Germany, Austria and Russia sign secret alliance, "Three Emperors' League," for three years.
- 1940 — Germans capture French port of Cherbourg in World War II.
- 1952 — British plan for Central African federation is announced.
- 1953 — Egypt is proclaimed a republic with Gen M. Naguib as president; South Korea releases 26,000 non-communist North Korean prisoners.
- 1961 — Three princes of Laos meet in Zurich, Switzerland, and agree to form coalition government to unite the war-ridden kingdom.
- 1965 — Air Vice-Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky assumes office as premier of South Vietnam and vows to spur war against Viet Cong.
- 1968 — Britain's House of Lords rejects Labour government's sanctions against Rhodesia.
- 1975 — Slayer of Saudi Arabia's King Faisal is publicly beheaded in front of government palace in Riyadh.
- 1985 — US space shuttle discovery, with Saudi Arabian prince aboard as passenger, launches a satellite for Arab world.
- 1987 — Israel condemns decision by Pope John Paul II to grant audience to Austria's President Kurt Waldheim.
- 1988 — Turkey's Premier Turgut Ozal is wounded slightly by gunmen as he addresses party convention in Ankara.
- 1989 — Afghan airliner crashes in Iran after gunmen seize plane and struggle with the pilot.

Russia: the second coming

Yeltsin might put it back on the map

MOSCOW, (UPI): Russia may stretch from the Baltic across Siberia to the Pacific but it is just one of the 15 republics of the Soviet Union. Boris Yeltsin might change that.

Even though most people around the world identify Russia so closely with the Soviet Union that the two are nearly synonymous, the Russian federation constitutionally has no more rights than the tiny Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, or Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia in the Caucasus. The Russian federated Soviet socialist republic is of course the heart of the Soviet empire, benefiting from Azerbaijan oil, cotton from the republic of Uzbekistan in Central Asia and the steel and coal of the Ukraine.

Czars

So staggering is Russia's breadth that the czars of old styled themselves sovereigns "of all the Russias" — as did the Russian Orthodox Church's patriarchs.

Under the czars, the nation was known as Russia, or the imperial Russian empire, including Poland and Finland as well as the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

But Vladimir Lenin's communists, after taking power in November 1917, eventually renamed their country the Soviet Union and made the Russian federation one of its republics, stripping Russia of pre-eminence.

In the land of communist ideology, the Russian federation does not have its own academy of sciences like other republics or its own Communist Party.

The 140 minorities of the world's most ethnically diverse country say Russia does not need such institutions because Russians dominate both the nationwide party and the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

But Russian nationalists now demand their own institutions, including a powerful, independent Parliament such as Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has allowed to be elected in the other republics.

In Yeltsin, who last month was elected chairman of Russia's new Parliament and thus the equivalent of president, the deputies feel they have found a leader with the stature to recoup the prominence they feel is their land's due.

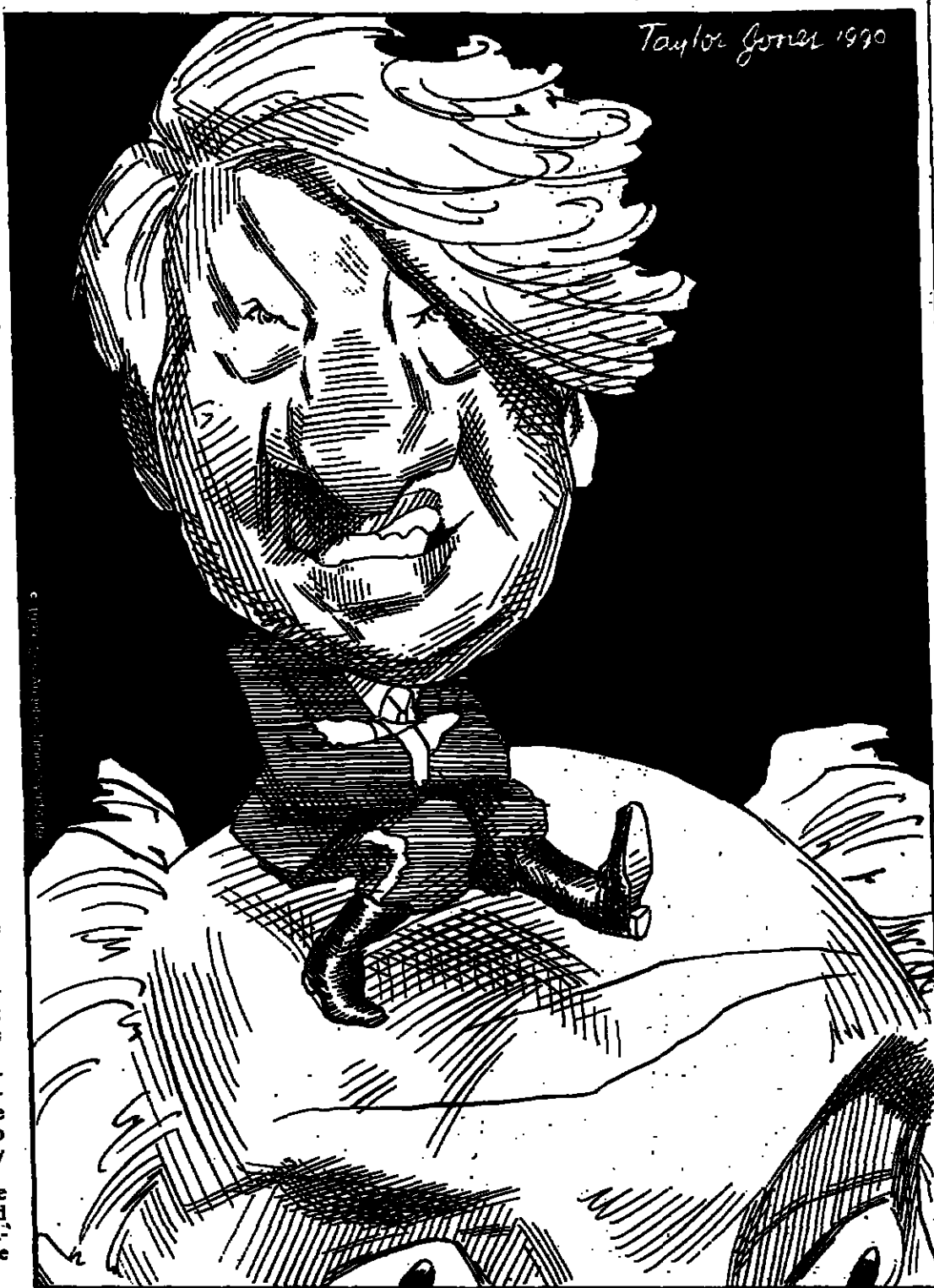
Second only in renown only to Gorbachev, Yeltsin has been a bitter rival of the Soviet president ever since Gorbachev oversaw his firing as Communist Party boss of Moscow and his expulsion from the Politburo.

He earned his twin cashiers by telling Gorbachev, in front of the entire Communist Party leadership, that perestroika was going nowhere. But the voters sent him to the Soviet Parliament and then to the Russian one with the biggest mandate of any candidate.

To lead the Russian republic's resurgence, the burly Siberian first will have to crack the rigid centralised system with which the ruling Communist Party and its Kremlin-appointed minions have ruled the 15 republics.

Further emasculating the republics' powers is the central planning system that deprives them of any say in how their resources are used and that can, on a whim, divert fish catches from Vladivostok to the Caspian Sea area.

The party's monopolistic power and the centralised non-market economy have been the two interlocking pillars by which the huge country, spanning 11 time zones over two-thirds of the world's land surface, has been ruled.



Award winners

SIR: Though the plays, presented at the Indian Arts Circle did not represent the best in each language, many of them were very good and the Indian community in Kuwait is very much obliged to the organisers and Indian Arts Circle for the encouragement given to the theatre.

Selecting the award winners is the most difficult part of any competition, especially when it is of aesthetic importance. Making honest decisions are as important as convincing the public of the fairness of the decisions. It was unfortunate that the organisers did not learn from last year's mistakes.

It is possible that each member of the jury evaluate the dramas, acting talent and the technical aspects of the plays differently. But that does not make a result which is far from truth. Like last year, this year too, the members of the jury have been taken for a ride by the organisers and one wonders how any man of self-respect would stand such manipulation at the hands of the organisers.

Many, who have sat through the plays will disagree with the announced result, the more with the best actress and best actor awards.

Awarding the actress, who had but a mediocre role to perform with best actress title was an insult to the lady herself, especially when glaring examples of good performances are there like that of the old woman in "Kothu."

Actors can be of similar calibre, but two actors sharing an award is something unheard of. Both Madhu and V.J. Antony are good actors, no doubt. But the award was for the role they performed! Anyone who saw both the plays would agree that the graveyard keeper of Madhu was no better than the shadow of the old man in "Kothu." If the organisers wanted to reward their beloved, they should have looked for more decent means.

The reporting of the same in a leading local newspaper was adding insult to injury. When reporting on a drama competition results, order of reporting would be best play, best director, best actor, best actress and so on. Ignoring the play that won three awards to an obscure corner and highlighting the names of the actor that shared an award and the best actress was the ugliest face of journalism. The newspaper also have an equal responsibility in promoting fair play. If they cannot do that, please at least spare the agony.

On second thought, the caption is right. "Madhu and Madhuri did steal the limelight" — literally.

Jacob Thomas,
Salmya.

Biggest spill

SIR: The control of fire on the oil-laden vessel crippled and leaking in the Gulf of Mexico, as reported in your newspapers, was a great relief for environmentalists and people who care for the planet Earth.

The firefighters prevented what could have been the biggest spill in US history. Mega Borg, which contained 38 million gallons of light crude oil would have brought an environmental catastrophe of greatest magnitude if the fire could not have been contained. The sinking of the ship and

breakup would have speeded out three times the size of the 11 million gallons spilled from Exxon Valdez off Alaska last year.

The ship, fiercely ablaze, was just 57 miles south-east of Galveston, Texas. Although the source of the explosion is not known, it is now seriously being questioned how dangers can be contained with these carriers of catastrophe carrying millions of tons of crude oil. When a catastrophe hits such a carrier, the oil spills threaten entire coastlines and ecological disasters follow. Such gargantuan vessels, which are already fatigued and battered after a quarter of a century of service, are still plying the high seas.

In response to the fire on Mega Borg, Shell suspended all crude shipments to US fearing huge liability claims in the event of an oil spill. This is the first of its kind decision by a large oil company and is representative of the fear which has now been incorporated as a result of claims against Exxon after the Valdez spill in Prince William Sound, Alaska. This has cost Exxon \$2 billion in cleaning efforts, excluding penalties for its role in Alaska spill.

Transportation

Shell's move is directed towards efforts to avoid involvement of mega oil companies in carrying out activities in environmental sensitive transportation of oil. This handling of the spills by these mega carriers raises serious doubts on the claims of oil industry. In case of Mega Borg, two days were wasted before the equipment arrived from Holland to put out the fire and a day to set up the equipment. The second concern is the lack of regulation of the tanker industry in the absence of proper training of deck officers and engineers to handle oil spills.

There has to be a code of conduct which the mega oil companies should adhere to. The profits on transportation could not justify the unlimited and uninsurable risk involved and, therefore, mega oil companies like Shell can easily take their hands off transportation sector leaving it to smaller companies which may be unable to meet large claims in case of a spill and be liquidated leading to even less regulation and less safeguard because the smaller companies with not much high stakes involved will be more concerned with transportation profits than maintenance and compliance of first class ship and its crew.

If all mega oil companies decide to suspend oil deliveries and wash their hands off the environmental sensitive transportation sector of black oil, then what we are sure of is higher number of accidents because the stakes will be much lower. The mega oil companies should not be allowed to wash their hands off the transportation to avoid enormous liability claims, as faced by Exxon. One cannot commercialise the profits of oil companies. Exxon cash flow in 1990 is expected to hit \$11 billion; in 1989, Exxon wrote off \$1.68 billion for spill-related costs, including \$300 million which they added in February 1990.

Since Feb 27, when settlement talks between the Justice Department and Exxon broke, an Anchorage jury charged Exxon with two felonies and three misdemeanours. The indictment is US government's most significant criminal pollution case ever. If convicted on all counts, Exxon faces probation and penalties likely exceeding \$700 million. This would include costs of cleaning up of the \$11 million crude oil barrel and restoring Prince William Sound. There are other more than 180 civil suits against Exxon upward of \$400 million in lost income and punitive damages.

If the government wins a conviction, then it could not have a very devastating effect on Exxon's balance sheet. Exxon has already fully provided and written off nearly \$2 billion for such costs. How would a smaller Bahama-based company with a capital of \$5 million and with a leased tanker operated by such a company face up claims if their operated tanker spilled oil equivalent to what Valdez did? It would just close its shop and any government or environmentalist would have no recourse.

The US Congress is in the process of passing a bill to set up a \$1 billion trust fund financed by an oil tax so as to counter oil spill problems. They are also taking the helm in search of safer oil tankers. Both House and Senate have passed measures that would require new oil tankers operating in US waters to have far better oil spill protections such as double-layered hulls; all older vessels will have to be retrofitted with double hulls. Already twenty four double-hulled tankers have been built carrying toxic chemicals. According to coastguards, such a buffer would have reduced the Valdez spill by as much as 60 per cent.

The mega oil company like Dupont has shown concern on cost and Exxon complains that its present decapitated 200-ton vessel, Valdez, would need as much as \$80 million if a doubled hull is added, but it would not be hard in a decade to quickly convert approximately 1,500 foreign flag tankers and 160 domestic ships as the cost of ship-safety measures would be passed on and add less than a penny a gallon at the pump.

The National Academy of Sciences is also looking at ways to prevent oil spills. The group is assessing double-hulled vessels, the use of protective, supposedly, rupture-proof membranes or bladders. They are also studying hydrostatic techniques, but the most important of all of this is that the well financed and sophisticated companies should not be allowed to abandon activities in environmental sensitive companies. Putting the fear of crime into corporations has led Economists to believe that the penalties efficiently deter corporate wrongdoing.

The five-court indictment returned by the grand jury in Anchorage resulting in fines up to \$700 million are penalties which are several times higher than the harm they inflict on societies. The Sentencing Commission has proposed that fines should average about twice the size of damages. In Exxon's case, just three years' ruined fishing in Prince William Sound has cost the local fishing industry \$300 million cost in lost revenue. Then, according to optimal punishment theory, the estimated total damages of \$700 million penalty makes sense.

The larger corporations by detaching themselves from ecological and environmental sensitive areas want to put off the fear and hence avoid the spending on regulation and compliance. This should be avoided at all costs.

Iqbal Latif,
Kuwait.

ALL Letters to the Editor must contain the writer's name and address. Publication is at the discretion of the Editor and letters are subject to the editing process for space or other reasons.

China

Yunnan ethnic minorities give less trouble

KUNMING, China, (AP): Yunnan province's 24 colourful minorities are a public relations boon for Beijing, but the picture-postcard image of ethnic groups happily dancing and singing is often a facade.

Many minorities face poverty, illiteracy and isolation. Some find their cultural existence threatened by years of forced assimilation by the surrounding Han Chinese.

The minorities in this remote, mountainous province of southwest China give the government little trouble compared to Tibetans and the Muslim minorities of Xinjiang, who have demonstrated violently for independence.

An old Sanyi woman selling hand-embroidered bags, seat covers and aprons in Kunming, the provincial capital, flashed a gap-toothed smile and proudly told a visitor she belonged to the Chinese Communist Party and had served in the local People's Congress.

Remote

Even in remote Lijiang, reachable only by a bumpy two-day bus ride across mountains, several Naxi (Naxi in Chinese) people say, "we are Chinese first, then Naxi."

"Yunnan's minority issues are the best-handled in China," said Shen Qirong, director of culture and education for Yunnan's Nationalities Affairs Commission. "Here, we are like a family."

"We have conflicts and arguments, but that's inevitable," he said, adding that most of the disputes were territorial.

Shen said none of Yunnan's minorities — 40 per cent of all those in China — ever had demanded independence.

He acknowledged the ethnic groups in Yunnan did not like the idea of being under Chinese rule, but he said they did not have specific complaints.

Many minority people say what they dislike is, as they describe it, the superior attitude of Han Chinese.

"They look down on us. That's wrong," said Xu Xue, an intellectual of the Naxi group. He said Han Chinese insult minority people by refusing to eat the local food, complaining of lack of hygiene and criticising them for not bathing.

Still, Shen said, "we have fewer minority problems than the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe because, historically, we have been a multi-nationality country."

Rebellious

Nearly 50 per cent of the Soviet Union's population is non-Russian, compared with less than eight per cent in China. Many minority people, especially in Yunnan, were assimilated into Chinese culture long ago.

Tibetans have been rebellious, battling Chinese security forces in protest for independence. On May 1, the Chinese lifted martial law in Lhasa, capital of Tibet, after more than a year.

In Xinjiang province, home to 7.3 million Hui, six million Uyghurs and several other Muslim ethnic groups, the latest violence occurred in April, when at least 22 people were killed in the suppression of a Muslim Khiriz "holy war" for independence.

Yunnan has major advantages over other parts of China in dealing with its minorities. The ethnic groups are comparatively small, ranging from 4,000 Dulong to 3.6 million Bai. They also are scattered in a large area and separated from each other by rivers and mountains.

Instead of dealing with ethnic disturbances, the government of Yunnan issues propaganda brochures that show beaming girls in colourful traditional garb, women with odd headaddresses working in the fields or markets, and entire counties turning out for exotic festivals.

Persecuted

During the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, minorities were persecuted and forced to give up their traditions, dress and language.

In recent years, China has generally allowed minorities to resume their old patterns of life, speak their own languages and wear traditional clothing.

In Dai, women of the Bai minority wrap colourful strips of cloth around their heads, wear bright red or pink aprons and carry their babies in elaborately embroidered cloth boards on their backs.

Floods of tourists fly to Xishuangbanna in south Yunnan every spring for the water-splashing festival, when the Dai people start their new year by dousing everything that moves with buckets of water.

The government gives minorities preferential treatment, including special food and lower minimum scores on college entrance exams. Minority couples are allowed to have two children, Chinese couples only one.

"We use special policies to amend past wrongs," Shen said.

QUOTE ME

"We call upon President Iliescu and his government to halt immediately any further action against Romania's fledgling democratic process. We urge President Iliescu and his government to engage opposition parties and other groups in dialogue to repair the damage to Romanian democracy caused by the past few days." — US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher.

"This is an absolute recognition of the legitimacy of our declaration that Latvia has begun a transition to independence. This is a new thing." — Latvian President Anatoli Gorbunov saying Gorbachev had made a concrete offer to enter negotiations.

"What we are worried about is the way in which the first challenge from opposition groups, which I have no doubt was an inadvertent challenge, they seem to have reacted in a way all too reminiscent of the old days, calling out a rent-a-mob of coal miners armed with pickaxe handles and knives." — British Foreign Office Minister William Waldegrave.

"It is my purpose that by Christmas there are no weapons in the hands of anyone unless they are part of the nation's army. We have decided to order the process of the reduction of the nation's armed forces so that by the time the first 100 days of my government are over, the army will be reduced to less than 41,000 men and women. This means half of the members that it had on April 25, the day I resumed the presidency of the republic." — Violeta Chamorro, Nicaraguan President.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Despite efforts

Iranian currency plunges

NICOSIA, June 17, (Reuters). The Iranian rial plunged against the dollar on the black market today despite a new government effort to bring foreign exchange dealings under control.

The dollar was trading for 1,420 rials, up 120 since Friday, and a 12 per cent premium over a new importers' rate established yesterday.

Banks in Tehran now sell dollars to importers of non-essential goods for 1,270 rials — much closer to black market rates.

Iran's official exchange rate, 70 rials to the dollar, is used mainly for imports of basic food and medicines. A preferential rate of 800 rials to the dollar remains in force for imports of machinery and raw materials for factories.

The new importers' rate is part of a Central Bank campaign to break the unofficial foreign exchange market in Tehran and other cities, to which the government in the past turned a blind eye. The rial is also traded in the Gulf, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan and London.

The Central Bank said on Tuesday it had issued 115 licences to moneychangers and banned foreign currency dealings by unauthorised individuals.

Alli Pakpour, a London-based money-dealer, said: "I have sold so many dollars in the past two days that I have no more left. I can't cope with demand. The situation is much worse than before the government introduced its new importers' rate."

Pakpour said he expected the dollar to rise to 1,500 rials in a near future.

The trend is upwards and the government's decision to arrest unauthorised moneychangers has only led to panic. People with hard cash are hanging on to it in anticipation of higher prices, Pakpour said.

Record profit for KPC

KUWAIT, June 17, (AP). The state-owned Kuwait Petroleum Corp. posted a record profit of 341 million dinars (\$1.2 billion) last year, Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Khalifa announced today.

Sheikh Ali, who heads the corporation's board, said in its annual report that the total marked a 142 per cent increase, more than 200 million dinars (\$700 million), over the 1988 profits.

The Kuwaiti corporation ranks eighth among the world's oil industry giants.

Sheikh Ali said it "realised a capital gain of 15 per cent and an annual average of 20 per cent throughout the nine years of its existence during which the value of its assets has increased fourfold."

The corporation has been expanding its exploration and production operations around the world, including acquiring refineries and downstream projects in Europe.

"The KPC has gained for itself a renowned and influential position in the oil industry worldwide," Sheikh Ali said.

Among the corporation's recent acquisitions was a \$300 million takeover of Mobil Italiana.

The corporation also owns three refineries with a total capacity of 220,000 barrels a day in Italy, the Netherlands and Denmark and more than 5,000 gas stations in several European countries.

The report was published as the oil and petrochemical industries employees' union decided to call off a strike scheduled for today to press for pay hikes.

The workers are already among the best paid in the Arab world.

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Bright forecast for services sectors

THE services sectors in the six Gulf states account for a sizeable percentage of the region's GDP, averaging close to 46.3 per cent in 1988. The largest contribution of services activities to gross domestic product is in Bahrain (62.4 per cent) followed by Qatar (52.6 per cent) and Saudi Arabia (48.6 per cent). The percentage contribution of these sectors to GDP in the other Gulf states ranges between 41 per cent and 42 per cent.

Activities in these sectors have been financed mostly by government expenditures derived from oil revenues with a sizeable portion of the domestic requirements being provided for by imports.

However, the trend in the coming decade is to encourage greater private sector participation, diversify the kind of services activities generated domestically

and reduce the dependence on the outside world for the provision of these services.

Promoting the services sectors appears to offer a chance to diversify Gulf economic structure, given the difficulties encountered in establishing viable agricultural and industrial activities aside from those related to oil and petrochemicals.

Henry Azzam, the chief economist of GIB said the Gulf region is considered more important as a net importer of services than a net supplier. In 1989, a total deficit of \$15.8 billion is estimated to have been recorded in the balance of services and transfers for the six Gulf states. This deficit has been on a declining trend after reaching a peak of \$44 billion in 1981.

Exports of services, which include earnings from shipping, aviation, insurance, banking,

tourism and other services recorded average rates of growth of 20 per cent per annum during the boom period of 1976-1981.

This gave way to annual rates of growth of 2 per cent during 1982-1985 period before declining in the subsequent three years. Payments to acquire services from abroad which rose at an annual rate of 35 per cent between 1976 and 1981, increased by less than 1 per cent during the period of 1982-1986 before declining thereafter.

The 1990s appear to be quiet promising, with the beginning of an upturn in economic activities and a general anticipation of better times ahead for the major services sectors. Because services activities are basically labour intensive, governments of the region are hoping that growth in these sectors will generate sizeable employment opportunities

for Gulf nationals in the years ahead.

The category of "other services" which includes banking, health, educational services, public administration, support services, consulting and engineering services, accounting and legal activities among others will not be discussed here. The presentation in this issue will be confined to a brief overview of insurance, aviation, shipping and tourism in the Gulf. Other services will be discussed in forthcoming issues.

The upturn in the region's trade activities is presenting shipping companies that serve the six Gulf states with fresh opportunities. Although hope of a quick boom period has been replaced by more realistic assessments, the shipping industry can look forward to a period of gradual but

(Continued on Page 14)

Consumer spending dips

Saudis boost investments

RIYADH, June 17, (Kuna): The year 1988 seemed to be a landmark that showed the end of the recession period and the start of growth in the regional and domestic economy, according to the annual report of the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry published here today.

The report, which covers the period of 1988, underlined two major developments characterising the year under review: the Gulf war between Iraq and Iran came to an end, though a lasting peace is yet to materialise, and Opec countries reached an accord that included Iraq and adopted a new production ceiling.

Other positive characteristics included improvement in local demand, credit institutions activity, growth in the non-oil sector and meeting deficits in national budgets through new measures which avoided relying on withdrawing from national

reserves. The report pointed out that the economy registered a net growth rate of 3.2 per cent despite a 1.1 per cent drop in oil revenues during the year. On the sectoral level, industry grew from 1.9 per cent in 1987 to 4.7 per cent in 1988, while agriculture continued its growth at more than 10 per cent.

Moreover, net government expenditure grew by SR19.3 billion and domestic government investments increased by 8.7 per cent over 1987. At the same time, consumer spending dropped from 91 per cent to 88.6 per cent leaving more for investment in production.

More importantly, the balance of trade showed an SR8 billion improvement, whereby exports exceeded imports in terms of value. This culminated a trend in reducing the budget deficit gap from SR52.7 billion in 1987 to SR35.9 billion in 1988 and SR25 billion in 1989.

A qualitative indicator sum-

ming off these developments was the increase in the Saudi work force by eight per cent and a reduction of foreign employment by seven per cent during the period.

The private sector performance also showed good progress, as it registered a 4.7 per cent growth rate in industry, 10.8 per cent in agriculture, five per cent in services and for the first time in several years, 6.4 per cent in construction, which had been badly hit by the recession period. All this led to the private sector contributing 44 per cent to the GDP.

The private sector improved its financial potential by bringing back some SR16.7 billion from abroad in 1988 to meet its domestic commitments. Moreover, the number of registered companies increased by 336 with a combined capital of SR1,350 million, while public companies alone added eight new firms with a

combined capital of SR2,576 million. By the end of 1987, the number of new producing factories totalled 44 with a total finance of SR452 million.

Joint projects have also shown a similar improvement. In the industrial sector alone, producing plants totalled 429 with a combined capital of SR49.2 billion, while the total number of industrial and other joint projects amounted to 1,567 with a combined capital of SR59.8 billion with the Saudi share in it being 75.7 per cent, public companies by the end of 1988 totalled 65 with a combined capital of SR45.5 billion.

However, along these lines the council has continued its efforts to carry out its duties in two main areas, to take all opportunities to increase and improve private sector contribution in the development drive and pool all the resources of the chambers of commerce kingdom-wide to support the private sector.

Stock market to get a boost

Italy seeks to improve image

MILAN, Italy, June 17, (Reuters). Once considered a side show to mainstream European financial action, Italy's stock exchange has in recent months become the continent's hottest bourse.

A daily turnover of around 300 billion lire (\$250 million) on the Milan Bourse may still seem small change when compared with the huge business done in London, Frankfurt or even Paris, but stock prices have been rising strongly.

Encouraged by the continuing good performance of the economy and the strength of the lira, foreign investors have been rushing to buy shares.

This foreign interest has been crucial in helping drive up the local MIB stock market index by 10 per cent since the beginning of the year, local stockbrokers say.

"I had an order recently for 10 billion lire (around \$8 million) from a foreign institution which did not mind what I bought. Just buy," they said, "Sergio Pigoli of Milan stockbrokers studio Pastormi told Reuters.

"To some extent it is a matter of fashion. At the start of the year it was West Germany, and then it was France where everybody wanted to be. Now it's Milan," he added. Further testimony to the awakening appetite for Italian stocks comes from the spate of international warrants or options launched by international brokerage houses in recent weeks.

These warrants, the latest of which was announced on June 15 by Italy's Istituto Bancario San Paolo Di Torino in conjunction with US financial house Salomon Brothers, give investors the chance to gamble on the continuing strength of the market for a relatively small stake.

Warrants are commonplace in the world's major bourses, but until recently they were a rarity in Italy.

Nevertheless, despite its new-found popularity, bourse officials and stockbrokers say the Italian market needs radical surgery if it is to survive in a future Europe without financial frontiers with the move to a unified market by 1993.

Sam Alphonso to present paper

Indian envoy to take part in NRI seminar

ARUN K. Budhiraja, Indian ambassador to Kuwait will participate as patron of the NRI Investors' Forum, Kuwait along with the other NRI delegates in the 3rd NRI Seminar, which will be held on July 5 and 6, 1990 at Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi.

The delegation will include R.P. Singh, first secretary, Indian embassy, M. Mathews, chairman, Indian Arts Circle, H.V. Rangaswamy, managing director, KJEC, leading NRI businessmen, doctors and other professionals from Kuwait.

The seminar will devote a special session on India's foreign trade and tourism to focus on measures to promote NRIs contribution in these sectors.

Sam Alphonso, member, high level Export Consultative Committee and a leading NRI businessman, will present a detailed paper on the subject in this session. Efforts are being made to highlight bottlenecks presently experienced in promoting Indian imports with constructive suggestions to alleviate these problems.

It is expected that minister of state for commerce and other senior government officials will attend this seminar. Therefore, NRIs having business deal-

ings in India, will have an excellent opportunity to communicate their suggestions as well as problem areas directly with the senior government officials.

In addition, the seminar will also include special presentations from the state industrial corporations to highlight the project investment opportunities and incentives made available to NRIs in various Indian states. A number of state corporation teams have confirmed their participation.

NRI businessmen from the Arabian Gulf countries can hold direct discussions with the government officials from the commerce, finance and other ministries as well as the state officials during the three day seminar.

In addition, this will also present a good opportunity to interact with Indian businessmen from other countries.

The seminar arrangements offer highly subsidised rates for registration as well as other hotel facilities. All NRIs are encouraged to avail of this special opportunity to participate in great numbers in this conference. For more details please contact Kuwait India International Exchange Co., Kuwait or Fahadhel.

Fundamentalist victory likely to slow foreign investment

ALGIERS, June 17, (Reuters). The triumph of Muslim fundamentalists in local elections last Tuesday threatens to delay the foreign credits and investment Algeria needs for economic recovery. Western bankers and businessmen said.

Just as socialist Algeria was opening up to foreign investors, adopting a finance law in March that gives them unprecedented freedom, the sweeping fundamentalist victory has introduced new political risks.

"These were only municipal elections and one should put them in perspective," said Isabelle Lavanant, in charge of the maghreb for Credit du Nord. "But if a potential investor came to me for advice, I would tell him to wait a few months."

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) captured 55 per cent of town councils and two-thirds of provincial assemblies in an upset victory over the National Liberation Front (FLN), which has ruled unchanged since independence from France in 1962.

FIS leader Abbasi Madani immediately seized the opportunity to demand dissolution of the FLN-run parliament, not due for re-

election until 1992.

For the record 864 foreign firms taking part in the Algiers International Fair under the slogan "partnerships," the results have struck a cautionary note.

"These elections will not necessarily influence Algerian economic life," said Francois Floutier, head of the giant French delegation of 328 firms. "But there is a situation of reserve and caution."

Algeria spends three-quarters of its annual hard currency revenue of around \$10 billion to service foreign debt of \$24 billion. There is little left over to import food, spare parts and material to keep factories running.

The March finance law gives foreign firms the right to form wholly-owned Algerian subsidiaries and majority-owned joint ventures with Algerian firms.

French bankers said joint ventures were being discussed between the Algerian state and corporate giants Michelin, Peugeot and Rhone Poulenc. Middle-sized French firms were studying partnerships with the private sector.

Arab and Western finance institutions

looking at joint investment companies that would take share in the capital of new Algerian commercial, industrial and real estate firms.

Only last week the Algerian government approved an agreement with the overseas private investment corporation, a US government agency that finances and insures private American investment in developing countries.

Even more serious is the potential impact on foreign borrowing. Algeria still has to secure financing for more than 80 per cent of its estimated current account deficit this year of around \$1 billion.

It has consistently rejected rescheduling and opted for the gradual replacement of short-term with medium-term debt — a strategy that can only work if banks co-operate.

But Western bankers, already at or near their lending limits for Algeria, have been bombarded with television and magazine images of triumphant Muslim fundamentalists who believe bank interest is sinful.



C.S.S. Khanpuri (left) chairman of the NRI Investors Forum, Kuwait pictured with other officials.



A view of the audience

Investment fund launched

ANZ Grindlays Bank launched the Second India Investment Fund yesterday at the Kuwait Sheraton Hotel.

ANZ Grindlays has already established a creditable track record in management of the first fund, which to the end of December 1989 had achieved pre-tax growth of 48 per cent. A unique feature of the second fund is the fact that it will have no capital gains tax liability in India.

This is possible due to a recent double tax treaty between India and Netherlands. Under this treaty, dividend income will suffer only 15 per cent tax instead of the usual 25 per cent. Although Dutch capital gains is normally levied at rates between 35

per cent and 40 per cent the managers have obtained a ruling from the authorities, the effect of which is that no tax at all will be payable on 80 per cent of revenue. As a result the managers anticipate a tax rate on the second fund of approximately half the 20 per cent rate normally suffered by NRIs.

Explaining the fund's investment philosophy of targeting new issues and those of expanding companies, Roger Cottrell said: "We believe that this is the sector of the market offering exceptional investment returns providing exceptional opportunities. We aim to provide this in the management of the second fund." The fund is now open for subscription and the earliest closing date is July 10, 1990.

Gulf Bank weekly market review

KD mostly lower

Kuwaiti dinar

Based on last week's opening middle market foreign exchange rates, the KD exchange rate eased against the dollar ending the week at 292.53 fils compared with its week before last closing of 291.92 fils. The KD was lower against the pound sterling, ending the week at 499.9 fils compared with its week before last closing of 492.82 fils.

The KD was lower against the DM ending the week at 172.98 fils compared with its week before last closing of 172.98 fils. The KD was also lower against the SFR ending the week at 205.43 fils compared with its week before last closing of 203.00 fils. The KD was slightly lower against the Canadian dollar ending the week at 249.65 fils compared with its week before last closing of 249.56 fils.

The KD was lower against the Australian dollar ending the week at 226.54 fils compared with its week before last closing of 225.65 fils, according to Gulf Bank weekly market review.

The KD was lower against the Jordanian dinar ending the week at 434.67 fils compared with its week before last closing of 433.76 fils. The KD traded slightly lower against all other GCC currencies compared to the week before last rates. As for the KD money market rates, short term interbank offer rates, traded at 8.68 per cent 8.81 per cent range same as the week before last. Also, both 6-month and 12-month rates traded at 8.81 per cent - 8.87 per cent range same as the week before last.

As for Treasury Bills, the CBK announced a new T-bill issue No. (125) of KD125 million with effective and maturity dates of June 20, and September 19, 1990.

World stock markets

Wall Street Stock prices firmed last week, to close higher underpinned by the "triple watching" expirations of June stock index futures, index options and individual stock options which drew late-session buying. Also the unwinding of sell programmes helped support the late rise. The Dow Jones Industrial Average opened the week at 2892 and closed higher at 2936, recording a gain of 74 points over the previous week's closing of 2862.

The FTSE-100 opened the week at 2348, and closed higher at 2390, recording a gain of 24 points over the previous week's closing of 2366.

US dollar

The US dollar traded firm last week, and remained confined to a narrow range.

Recent US economic data showing consumer prices rose 0.2 per cent in May and the trade deficit narrowing in April was reasonably close to expectations and had little impact on the dollar. Later, the dollar got a lift from a bigger than expected gains in the US industrial production and capacity utilisation.

The modest rise in May US consumer prices reflects a gradual but stubborn rise in prices, but the data are moderate enough to allow the Fed to ease credit if other indicators continue to signal weakness. The May CPI rose 0.2 per cent to 0.3 per cent excluding food and energy. In April, both rose 0.2 per cent.

Complicating the US economic scenario were higher-than-expected May US industrial production and capacity utilisation figures which raised questions over whether the Fed should ease interest rates over the next month. May industrial output was reported up 0.6 per cent, after being unchanged in April, while capacity use rose to 83.6 per cent in May from 83.3 per cent in April.

Pound sterling

The pound sterling opened the week against the dollar at \$1.6860/70 and closed higher at \$1.7090/00 compared to its week before last closing at \$1.6835/45, as the UK currency remained supported by high UK interest rates and speculation that sterling could become a full member of the European Monetary System soon.

The pound fell slightly after UK inflation failed to show signs of moderating in May. UK May retail price index was higher than generally expected, showing a year-on-year

rise of 9.7 per cent against speculation of 9.6 per cent and compared with 9.4 per cent in April. Excluding mortgage interest payments and the new poll tax, the RPI rose 7 per cent in May after 6.5 per cent in April. Although the core inflation figure was disappointing, perceptions that Britain will not reduce its high interest rates following the data underpinned the pound.

Japanese yen

The Japanese yen opened the week against US dollar at 154.65/75 yen and closed higher at 153.85/95 yen, but slightly lower compared to its week before last closing at 153.45/55 yen.

Japan's cost of living is being held in check by the reluctance of major corporations to pass on rising production costs to consumers. The wholesale price index (WPI) declined 0.3 per cent in May, its first month-on-month decline for six months. Despite record money supply growth and a tight labour market, inflationary pressures in Japan are being contained for the time being by the yen's recent strength and the willingness of Japanese companies to act as inflationary shock absorbers.

The yen is likely to trade against the dollar within a 152-154 range.

Deutsche mark

The mark opened the week against the US dollar at 1.6913/23 marks and closed higher at 1.6890 marks compared to its week before last closing at 1.6975/85 marks. The mark ended firmer picking up some strength from gains in the Swiss franc after the Swiss National Bank as it intends to maintain its restrictive monetary policy in future months. The mark was also underpinned by firm West German bond yields and the fear of Bundesbank intervention to cap the dollar's rise against the mark.

Other currencies

French franc
The French franc opened the week against the US dollar at FFR5.6925/45 and closed higher at FFR5.6825/45, compared to its week before last closing at FFR5.7155/75. Persistent uncertainty over the impact of German economic and monetary union pushed the mark down against other European Monetary System currencies, allowing the French franc to continue its recent recovery.

In chalking up fresh gains against the mark, the French franc shrugged off continued weakness in domestic bonds and shares as well as drop in the call money rate to the bottom of the bank of France's target corridor of 9.5 to 10.25 per cent.

Swiss franc
The Swiss franc opened the week against the US dollar at SFR1.4395/05 and closed higher at SFR1.4345/55, compared to its week before last closing at SFR1.4490/00, underpinned by a comment by the Swiss National Bank reiterating that its monetary policy would remain restrictive in coming months.

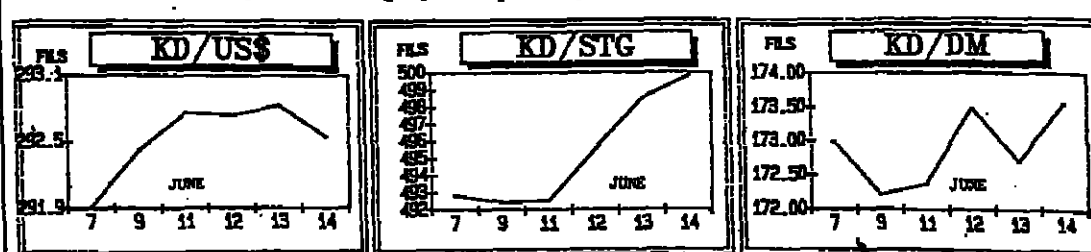
Canadian dollar
The Canadian dollar opened the week against the US dollar at C\$1.1705/10 and closed slightly lower at C\$1.1708/18, but higher than its week before last closing at C\$1.1744/49. Canada's consumer price index rose 0.2 per cent in May, seasonally adjusted, after rising 0.1 per cent in April and 0.3 per cent in March.

Precious metals

Gold
Gold bullion prices opened the week at \$355.25/\$35.75 and closed lower at \$347.348, recording a loss of \$7 over the previous week's closing at \$354.50/\$34.90.

Silver
Silver bullion prices opened the week at \$5.00-\$5.02 and closed lower at \$4.81/\$4.83, recording a loss of 0.21 cents over the previous week's closing at \$5.02/\$5.04.

Platinum
Platinum prices opened the week at \$483/\$484 and closed lower at \$474/\$475, recording a loss of \$14/oz over the previous week's closing at \$488/\$489.



Ministers call for freer trade

ANTIGUA, Guatemala, June 17, (UPI): Central American economic and foreign ministers agreed yesterday that the answer to the region's devastating economic crisis lies in implementing export-oriented and free-market economic policies.

In a first draft of a proposal presented to the presidents of Central America and Panama during the weekend's economic summit, the ministers called on the international community for fresh loans and grants, and a renegotiation of the region's staggering foreign debt that would allow for growth and development.

The document — compiled Friday by the ministers of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama — backed existing programmes in the region aimed at privatizing state-run industries.

It focused on finding ways to expand the market for Central American goods, mainly to the United States and Europe.

The ministers urged their presidents, who opened a two-day summit Saturday morning in Antigua about 30 miles (48 km) from Guatemala City, to continue expanding current import substitution programmes, while recommending gradual trade liberalization.

The document suggested creating a fund made up of money contributed by Central American countries, foreign governments and private donors that would "rescue the debt at market value."

Guatemalan Foreign Minister Ariel Rivera Irujo said, "first we have to straighten out the Central American common market and then we have to go look for funding."

The ministers stressed the importance of adopting policies that would lead the region towards greater self-sufficiency.

They also called for concrete measures to stabilize farm product prices by "co-ordinating policies that permit the effective incorporation of the agricultural sector into economic and social development, initiating programmes that guarantee a steady supply of basic products."

A specific measure regarding imports proposed establishing a common tariff system within the structure of the general agreement on tariffs and trade, or GATT.

The document also called on the presidents to find ways to dilute any immediate negative effect the proposed programme might have on the region's poor and urged more input from the private sector in co-ordinating the new plan and any future economic policies.

Personal spending to remain steady: report

TOKYO, June 17, (UPI): Personal expenditures in Japan will remain robust in fiscal 1990 because of the changing style of spending, a bank report said today.

The Yokohama Bank said in its report on trends of personal consumption that the present consumption boom is characterized by a new type of spending. "Purchases are made to improve the quality of life and this type of spending is spreading not only among families with assets but among consumers of all levels," the report said.

"This kind of consumption is from a deep-seated desire to improve living conditions and has become habitual, making it difficult for consumers to revise their spending downward."

The report said the recent slump in stock prices will inevitably cause negative impact on consumption but should not push down the growth of consumption as much as 0.8 percent.

Spending by salaried workers should remain firm mainly because the spring wage hike at almost 6.0 per cent exceeded the 5.2 per cent rise last year, the report said.

(Continued from Page 13)

steady growth. The ongoing diversification of the Gulf economies, particularly the rising production of aluminium and petrochemicals will further give a boost to the region's shipping industry as non-oil exports pick up.

The demand for Gulf oil is projected to rise in the 1990s and the opening up of Eastern Europe has also created a new potential market. The stronger world oil demand will further push up freight rates encouraging the Gulf countries to embark on a tanker expansion programme. Ports and airports expansion and modernisation schemes for the GCC countries are also on the cards, though it remains to be seen whether passenger traffic and cargo level increases will justify the expansion.

The cessation of hostilities between Iran and Iraq and the projected upturn in economic activities in the 1990s has ushered in a new era for the airline industry in the Gulf.

The prevailing optimism has generated a rush for new aircraft orders as the region's airlines gear up to take advantage of the new economic and political conditions which are more conducive to airline growth.

The strengthening of tourism

potentials lies in the fact that there is room to develop an identity without sacrificing national heritage, culture or traditions. Indeed, it is these that constitute the capital required to promote Gulf tourism. Though it is likely to be a while before the tourist industry does fully take off, however, when it does it will be a boon to the region's economies.

Falling oil revenues and the consequent shrinkage of business in the Gulf have had their effects on the formerly thriving insurance and reinsurance markets in the region. However, insurance companies are now more optimistic. Some even see the economic slowdown of the 1980s as a blessing in disguise because it has created an awareness among businessmen, importers, and even laymen about the advantages of having insurance coverage.

The basic structure of the Gulf insurance industry is now in place. It is expected that as economic activities in the Gulf continue to pick up momentum, the region's imports will rise generating an upturn in marine cargo premiums. New ventures in petrochemicals, gas liquefaction, chemical fertilizers and oil

refineries are expected to emerge alongside such infrastructure requirements as water desalination, electricity generation and other utilities and services. All of these developments will warrant insurance coverage in one form or another, and Gulf insurance and reinsurance companies are well positioned to exploit them.

Following the slump in the Gulf airline industry of the 1980s, growth prospects for the 1990s appear more encouraging. Passenger and freight traffic is forecast to grow and the region's airlines are poised to cash in on the new trend. Boeing Commercial Airplane Company forecasts traffic growth of 5.7 per cent a year over the coming ten years for all Middle East and North African airlines. For the same period, McDonnell Douglas projects annual average growth of 5.1 per cent in passenger traffic between Europe and the Middle East, and similar growth in cargo traffic.

The end of the Gulf war should lead to the opening up of airspace allowing airlines to take more direct routes thus saving on fuel and flying time. There should be an increase in traffic to both Iran and Iraq particularly as reconstruction activities in the two countries pick up.

The return to profitability has been accompanied by cost cutting measures designed to reduce overheads. Kuwait Airways in particular has been successful in its rationalisation drive. The airline has remained profitable for the sixth year in a row with the 1988 figures showing a record profit of \$11.3 million up from \$78,767 the previous year.

Its commercial fleet comprises 19 aircraft with a passenger load factor of 63 per cent in 1988. The airline is looking at new destinations to raise market share and is making efforts to improve capacity utilisation on its existing routes which cover 42 international destinations.

Gulf Air which is jointly owned by Abu Dhabi, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain registered a turnaround in 1988 with profits of \$6.8 million following a reported loss of \$7.7 million in 1987. In 1989, profits soared to \$73.4 million boosted by funds from the sale and leaseback of eight ageing Boeing 737s.

The airline is presently expanding its fleet as well as its route network. Gulf Air has 21 aircraft and a reported passenger load

factor in 1988 of 65 per cent. The rise in passenger traffic has contributed to the airlines' profitability. Previously a dramatic slump in revenues brought into effect cost cutting measures which involved staff reduction of about 8 per cent and the closing down of overseas divisions. The airline is hoping to have as much as 50 per cent of its business generated outside the Gulf in the next three to four years.

The region's largest airline Saudia has also been through some lean times. Its commercial fleet comprises 20 Boeing 747s, 17 Lockheed TriStars, 11 Airbus A300-600s and 19 Boeing 737s. It operates over 50 international destinations and 23 stations within the Kingdom and has an aircraft fleet of 43 carriers. The slow growth in airline traffic in previous years and national budgetary constraints have prevented replacement of the airline's fleet.

Though Saudia ranks as the eighteenth largest airline in the world in terms of passengers it has not been profitable due to the low fares charged on its domestic routes. These are close to \$0.08 a kilometre which is as little as a

half or a third of the fare in Europe or North America. The Dubai-based Emirates Airlines is the region's newest airline and started operations in October 1985.

The airline has seen its passenger traffic surge from 20,000 in 1985 to about 800,000 in 1989. The airline currently runs more than 120 flights a week to destinations in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East and is planning to further increase its market share. It carries half of the passengers travelling between Dubai and London and has a major share of traffic to the Indian sub-continent.

Though the region's airlines look set to take advantage of new opportunities and boost their overall revenues, they will be faced with increasingly tough competition on their international routes. The trend in world aviation these days is the emergence of mega carriers following new airline groupings.

This along with an emerging barrier free Europe will mean that the airlines in the Gulf region will need to co-operate in order to compete successfully.

(To be continued)

Upturn seen in the Gulf economic activities

Better times ahead for major services sectors

Iran, Pakistan and Turkey hold ministerial meeting

ECO seeks more economic links

ISLAMABAD, June 17, (Agencies): Iran, Pakistan and Turkey held a ministerial meeting in Islamabad tomorrow to breathe life into their flagging Economic Co-operation Organisation (ECO).

Joint venture plans have suffered bureaucratic delays since ECO was formed five years ago out of the defunct Regional Co-operation for Development that grouped the three countries before the 1979 Iranian revolution.

Tomorrow's meeting is aimed at upgrading the organisation to ministerial level to help speed up decisions, Pakistani officials said.

Recommendations to upgrade the body were made by top Foreign Ministry officials of the three countries at a meeting in Tehran in May.

Their proposals will be put for

approval to Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati of Iran and Sahabzada Yaqub Khan of Pakistan and the Turkish Minister of State in charge of Economic Affairs, Isin Celebi.

Important decisions to strengthen ECO and give it a "new thrust and direction" are likely to be taken, one official said.

Proposed projects include an investment bank and a trade preferential system, and Pakistani officials said significant progress had already been made on both.

A preferential tariff protocol has been drafted and progress has been made on the list of items to be traded among the three countries under this arrangement, the officials said.

An Istanbul-based ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry was set up in April this year to help promote trade and

economic co-operation. Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati left today for Pakistan to attend the first foreign ministerial session, the news agency Irna said.

Before leaving Velayati called the meeting a "useful step towards advancing the common goals of the three member states," saying Islam was the most important factor binding the countries, according to Irna, which was monitored in Cyprus.

Meanwhile, Iranian Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh said in Tehran today that his country's oil production capacity will rise to 4.5 million barrels a day in two years, Irna reported.

Speaking at a news conference, Aqazadeh stressed that Iran would adhere to the production quota of 3.14 million barrels a day set by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries,

even though its capacity was larger than that, Irna reported.

Aqazadeh reported Iran's output capacity in March at 3.3 million barrels a day. He said then that Iran would be able to pump 3.7 million barrels a day by the end of July, and up to 4 million barrels a day next year.

Iran's oil industry, which produces 90 per cent of its foreign currency revenues, was severely hit during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Industry analysts say that much of its infrastructure is ageing and estimate that modernization to sustain increased output could cost as much as \$8 billion.

Aqazadeh said Iran has opened representative offices in Rotterdam, Singapore and the Caribbean "in a bid to maintain active presence in the consumer market and deliver oil directly to the consumer."

Amoco Corp. pleased with Iran settlement

CHICAGO, June 17, (AP): Amoco Corp. says the \$600 million Iran has agreed to pay for company facilities seized during the Islamic Revolution in 1979 will be largely offset by taxes and an unrelated environmental cleanup charge.

Nonetheless, the company hailed the settlement announced Friday.

"We have been discussing things with the Iranians and we were pleased to reach the settlement," Amoco spokesman Mike Thompson said Friday.

Two subsidiaries of Chicago-based Amoco had filed claims against the National Iranian Oil Company.

Under terms of the agreement, Amoco Iran Oil Co. will receive \$540 million for the seizure of four Gulf drilling fields and the oil terminal on Kharg Island, Iran's most important oil terminal.

Amoco International Finance Corp. was awarded \$60 million for the expropriation of a petrochemical processing plant that was half-owned by Amoco.

The company said it expects to recognize the all-cash settlement in its second-quarter results, provided it receives the money by the end of June as anticipated.



Sharp service training

An intensive service training programme was conducted by Maseelah Trading Co. on a wide range of Sharp electronic products backed by the technical expertise of Sharp Corporation. Uematsu of Sharp instructed the team of latest products from Sharp including world meat systems and electronic controlled VCR's. This service training programme is part of Maseelah Trading Co's commitment to quality after sales support on all Sharp products sold in Kuwait. Picture shows Uematsu of Sharp instructing MTC service technicians on latest Sharp products.

Vintage Swatch prices rising fast

AT a sale of modern art organised by Mangisch auction house in Zurich on Saturday, 19 May 1990, a number of Swatch specials stole the show by going for sums that were astronomical in relation to their original retail prices. A feat made all the more remarkable by the fact that the watches in question were ordinary manufactured items (albeit limited editions), none of which was more than seven years old.

The undisputed star of Saturday's auction was an Original Jelly Fish, produced as a limited edition of 200 in 1983 and distributed to selected journalists to mark Swatch's international launch. The watch went under the hammer for a sensation of Sfr. 5,750. (including commission).

Only slightly less impressive was the sale of a complete set of four Keith Haring Specials to an unknown collector for Sfr. 10,350. (likewise including commission).

But if there were the outstanding sales of the day, there were plenty of other Swatches from the ordinary range fetching bids up to 17 times as high as their original retail prices back in 1983. A watch costing a

mere Sfr. 39.50 seven years ago, for example, fetched no less than Sfr. 690. — including commission, on Saturday.

If we compare prices at Saturday's sale with those at the last auction about six months ago, one thing is immediately obvious: prices for vintage Swatch watches continue to soar.

And with the body of the avid Swatch collectors growing all the time, the trend seems likely to continue. It is fascinating to see the lengths to which Swatch lovers will go to get their hands on a rarity, or simply a Swatch that has taken their fancy. A thriving unofficial network of collectors already exists in Europe, through which enthusiasts are able to contact collectors, locate the watches they are looking for and organise sales and exchanges.

All of which bodes well for the official Swatch Collectors Club, due to be launched this summer and initially restricted to Switzerland and Germany. If current trends are anything to go by, the Club seems destined to be an immediate and resounding success.

Telefonica reports profits up 9.6 pc

Cash flow expanding

MADRID, Spain, June 17, (AP): Spain's Telefonica earned net profits of 68,898 billion pesetas (\$661.92 million) in 1989, up 9.6 per cent from 62,845 billion a year earlier, the firm's chairman said yesterday.

Candido Velazquez also said pre-tax profits for the first five months of this year rose 18 per cent to 41,268 billion pesetas on the strength of continued high demand for new phone lines and growing phone use propelled by Spain's fast-growing economy.

The state-controlled telephone monopoly company last year took in earned revenues of 710,904 billion pesetas, up 16.1 per cent over the 612,536 billion pesetas reported a year before. Revenues in the first five months of 1990 rose 331,212 billion pesetas, up 18 per cent over the same period the previous year.

Velazquez said Telefonica continued to invest large sums to reduce a huge backlog of new phone line requests and implement an ambitious modernization programme.

Investment last year soared to 583,762 billion pesetas, up 63 per cent over the 357,815 billion pesetas of a year earlier, permitting the installation of 1.47 million telephone lines, 51.7 per cent more than the previous year.

Cash flow expanded in 1989 to 334,658 billion pesetas, up 9.9 per cent from 304,537 billion pesetas in 1988.

Of the new lines installed last year, 87.3 per cent were digital. Spain boasted 13.16 million installed telephone lines at the end of last year, of which 19.6 per cent were digital, up from 10.8 per cent just a year earlier.

Stage set for historic experiment of German monetary union

BONN, June 17, (Reuters): West Germany's parliament will pass a treaty on monetary union of the two Germanys this week, setting the stage for one of the most ambitious economic experiments in history.

The treaty has its final reading on Thursday in West Germany's lower house of parliament and will become law on Friday, now that the opposition Social Democrats (SPD), who control the upper house, have decided not to block its passage.

"This is a historically unique experiment," said Finance Minister Theo Waigel in a recent newspaper interview.

West Germany, Europe's biggest economy, will introduce its marks, taxes and free market rules into East Germany from July 1, as the first step towards political union.

East Germany's once a showpiece economy in Eastern Europe but hopelessly backward by Western standards, will scrap generous price subsidies and force state-owned firms to face the chill wind of competition for the first time.

"Monetary union means the change from a centrally planned economy to the free market overnight," said Waigel.

West German reform of East Germany's economy will be a test case for other countries in Eastern Europe which are ditching centrally planned systems and seeking Western investment.

"Failure by East Germany would have catastrophic consequences for commitment by our Western partners in the countries of Eastern Europe," said Tilly Necker, president of the West German Confederation of Industry (BDI).

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl believes rapid monetary union is

the only way of keeping East Germans from abandoning their country for the higher living standards of West Germany.

Next month East Germans will be able to convert up to 6,000 marks (\$3,500) of savings into West German marks one-for-one with their own virtually worthless currency, putting Western goods and holidays within reach for the first time.

More than 300,000 East Germans have left the country since the opening of the Berlin Wall late last year, placing huge strains on West Germany's social security programmes and housing market.

But Kohl, who proposed rapid monetary union in February against the advice of cabinet colleagues and the country's powerful central bank, has yet to convince West Germans that his plans

do not threaten their prosperity.

His high-risk gamble could prompt a backlash. Polls show unification is popular but that most West Germans oppose paying for it with tax rises and believe the treaty is too generous to East Germany.

Kohl has said tax rises will not be needed and has tried to calm these fears by announcing a 110 billion-mark (\$65 billion) German unity fund to raise money from capital markets to handle the costs.

"But there's a suspicion that the soothing noises from Bonn are not realistic — either because they don't know what the real costs are, or because they're fibbing about them," said Glenn Davies, chief economist at Credit Lyonnais in London.

These fears have been exploited by Oskar Lafontaine, the SPD's maverick

candidate for chancellor, who told party members last Thursday that Kohl's hasty approach to monetary union will wreak havoc on East Germany.

Although the SPD will vote for the treaty it has distanced itself from the outcome. "He (Kohl) alone bears all responsibility for the consequences of the path he has forced," a SPD resolution said.

Industry experts believe most of East Germany's 8,000 state-owned firms will not survive the shock of free market competition. This could boost unemployment from 100,000 to as much as 30 per cent of the nine-million workforce by the year-end.

Kohl hopes West Germany's powerful corporations will invest in East Germany to put the unemployed back to work, but the Bonn government has described the response so far as disappointing.

KUWAIT UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCE CENTRE FACULTY OF MEDICINE

The Department of Psychiatry is seeking Applicants for a position of a Scientific Assistant.

The candidates should preferably be Kuwaitis with B.Sc. or B.A. degree, experience in computer work is essential, and experience in field research is an advantage.

Applications together with C.V. should be sent to the following address within one month.

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John Cleese intends to go on, no slowdown for this funny man

CHICAGO, June 17, (AP) Sixteen years ago in "Monty Python and the Holy Grail," John Cleese mined the Middle Ages for laughs.

But in his own middle age, the British writer and actor believed for a while that his style of comedy had become as outdated as the medieval customs the Python film parodied.

The international success of his 1988 comedy, "A Fish Called Wanda," erased some of the self-doubt, Cleese said in a recent interview in Chicago. But the experience taught him something.

"If you're doing anything creative, you have to assume that you do not know that you know," he said. "The moment you think you know — I know how to do this, I know

how to make comedy films work — the day you think that, you're dead.

"But if you really wonder each day if you can do it, if you know that each day if you're starting from scratch and you can fall on your face at any moment, then I think you

have a chance of going on and doing good work."

At age 50, the multi-faceted Cleese clearly intends to go on, building upon the successful work he's done in the past.

During the next 12 months, Cleese plans to finish co-writing a second non-fiction book with British psychiatrist Robyn

Skinner and oversee the production of some new corporate training films for Video Arts, a lucrative London-based company he helped found in 1972.

The founders sold Video Arts to its management in November, but Cleese still writes and acts in the humorous films and remains "our creative guru," said Ann Boland, general manager of the company's US subsidiary, based on the Chicago area.

By mid-1991 Cleese expects to begin work on a movie reuniting him with his "Wanda" co-stars Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Kline and Michael Palin. Cleese also said he hopes to work once more with Charles Crichton, the elderly director of "Wanda," which Cleese wrote and produced. He wouldn't disclose details of the film, except that it will be a

comedy.

One thing Cleese's plans don't include is a break in the frenetic pace he has set since 1963 when, after earning a law degree from Cambridge University, he instead pursued an acting and writing career.

His work with the Cambridge Footlights, an amateur stage group, led to appearances in several BBC comedy shows, including "Monty Python's Flying Circus." The 1969 series was exported to the United States and introduced American viewers to the absurd and irreverent deadpan humor of Cleese, Palin, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Terry Gilliam and Graham Chapman, who died in October.

The TV programme spun off a series of Python stage shows, books, records and

films that served as launching pads for solo careers for the troupe's members.

Cleese's roles and projects since then reflect the diversity of his interests.

He expanded his stock of comic characters by creating ill-tempered hotel owner Basil Fawlty in the mid-1970s British TV series "Fawlty Towers." But Cleese also has played everything from Shakespeare's Petruchio in an Old West sheriff in Lawrence Kasdan's 1984 film, "Silverado."

And although he won an Emmy award in 1987 for his guest performance as a psychiatrist on the US television series "Cheers," Cleese views himself primarily as a writer.

"I've often noticed that something in me slightly bristles when people say I'm an

actor," said Cleese, whose original screenplay for "Wanda" was nominated for an academy award and won a David of Donatello Award, Italy's Oscar.

His real-life role as a psychotherapy client piqued his interest in psychiatry and led to his co-authorship with Skinner of "Families and How to Survive Them," which was published in 1983. The sequel will be titled "Life and How to Survive It."

Cleese has been divorced twice and has two children.

He said he nearly gave up comedy three or four years ago after some comedians he had recruited for an Amnesty International benefit — people who had influenced his own style — got very few laughs from the hip young London audience.



Warren Beatty (inset) and Madonna in 'Dick Tracy.'

Madonna gyrates

What was Beatty doing there?

IT WAS the wrap party for "Dick Tracy," the new film that opened June 15 based on the original 1930s comic strip. In the center of the floor the lady known as Madonna — a cultural phenomenon — danced by herself as if transfixed. Dressed in a risqué black bra and a skintight corset, she gyrated provocatively. Whenever a would-be partner approached she physically pushed him away.

At a table on the sidelines Warren Beatty, now 52, sat watching her. From time to time she went and sat on his lap for a moment, but then quickly went back to dancing alone.

It was a sight long-time Beatty fans never thought they'd see: the one-time megastar, director and most successful Don Juan in the history of the movies, looking out of place. The expression on his face clearly asked: "What am I doing here?" It was Beatty as the sugar daddy, only this time she had all the sugar. Madonna — more than 20 years his junior — had picked the hall, hired the caterer and selected the band. It was Madonna's show and Beatty had tagged along for the ride.

On the set of their movie it was the same. A typical scene went like this: Beatty, as usual, was on the telephone. While he talked, his leading lady, on her mark and ready to shoot, fumed. Finally, she had had it.

"Beatty," yelled the Material Girl, "if you're not off that phone in one minute I'm outta here."

Beatty dropped the phone as if it were red hot.

"I couldn't believe it," said a long-time Beatty associate. "Diane (Keaton) used to walk away when he was on the phone, but she always came back. I guess he knew he couldn't count on that with Madonna."

To see Beatty, former dedicated Casanova, being bossed around by a woman was more than some of his old pals could stand. Since he first emerged on the Hollywood scene almost three decades ago as the handsome leading man in *Spartan in the Grass* (1961), women have flocked to his arms. Joni Collins, Natalie Wood, Leslie Caron, Isabelle Adjani, Britt Ekland, Carly Simon, Julie Christie, Michelle Phillips. It seems he has always had women in the palm of his hand. "International banking" he called it — a woman in every port.

"It wasn't a question of whether Warren would get a woman into bed," said a long-time Beatty watcher. "But rather when and where. It was inevitable."

Although most of Beatty's women have kept quiet about their romance with the star, a decade ago Ekland came clean about life with Beatty. She wrote in her 1980 memoir *True Brit*: "Beatty was the most divine lover of all. His libido was as lethal as high-octane gas. I had never known such pleasure and passion in my life."

Women gave up husbands, careers, lifestyles, even respectability for Beatty. But only Madonna.

"She's no walkover," said one member of the *Tracy* production team. "She's not a creature of Hollywood. She's a street kid and she doesn't take any guff from anyone. In fact, she gave him hell."

The powerful Beatty — politically savvy, friend to presidents and potentates — puts up with it for a very simple reason. In today's Hollywood he needs Madonna a lot more than she needs him. Beatty may still be a big gun in movie circles, but there where the real power is, Madonna Louise Versace is the one who's hot. She's the one who's in.

In case Beatty missed the point, it was forcibly driven home to him recently when he was dining with friends at a trendy Hollywood cafe. Short of cash to pay the bill, he reportedly told the young waitress he'd like to charge account.

"Who are you?" asked the waitress. After telling the waitress who he was, she continued to stare at him blankly. Eventually another member of the party took care of the bill to avoid further embarrassment.

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Warren Beatty in his role as Dick Tracy.

Roxette's road to success

Hottest musical export from Sweden

STOCKHOLM, June 17, (Reuters) An American exchange student liked the sound of Sweden's Roxette so much that he took a tape of their domestic hit "The Look" home to Minneapolis and pestered his local radio station to play it.

Now Roxette's songs are being played by radio stations around the world and the group has become the hottest musical export Sweden has had since Abba left the international pop scene a decade ago.

Per Gessle, the group's songwriter and guitar player, described Roxette's road to success.

"It was an almost dizzying, like a Cinderella story," he said. "The Look" spread from station to station and soon we were heard across the United States," he said.

Gessle and Marie Fredriksson, a dynamic blonde singer who also writes for the group, led their band to the big time in the spring of 1989 when "The Look" soared to the top of the US charts.

A second hit, "Listen to Your Heart," reached number one only a few months later, in October, 1989.

And earlier this month Roxette's latest song "It Must Have Been Love," receiving global exposure in the movie "Pretty Woman" featuring actor Richard Gere, has given Roxette their third number one hit in the US in about a year.

Gessle, 31, and Fredriksson, 32, are both from the southern Swedish town of Halmstad. Sometimes described by the Swedish media as looking like the British group The Eurythmics, the two played with different bands for several years prior to joining up with four others to create Roxette.

Roxette was discovered by the US music industry after Dean Cushman from Minneapolis took their first hit record to his hometown.

The success was almost instant. "They called from EMI (the group's record company) when I was in the laundry room and told me that Marie and I were on the top of the list, before Madonna and the Stones and everybody else," Gessle told Sweden's daily Svenska Dagbladet.

Swedish groups have had few commercial successes since Abba disbanded. Roxette's "The Look" was the first Swedish song to reach the top of the US charts since Abba's "Dancing Queen" hit number one in 1977.

"Roxette is definitely Sweden's biggest group since Abba," said promotion manager Marie Dimberg at Sweden's EMI.

To Gessle, charts have always been



Marie Fredriksson of Roxette.

important. "I started arranging my records after the ranking in a Swedish radio programme at the age of seven. Even since then I've liked to keep track on lists, which has become big on various markets and what tendencies they represent," he said.

But he soon realised it would be more fun to play.

"I was 17 and happened to put my hand around the neck of a guitar. I haven't let go since," he told Svenska Dagbladet.

Fredriksson says the group's success can be attributed to the chemistry between her and Gessle. But they are a pair only on stage and not in private.

Said Dimberg: "That special something they have is in the combination

between per's songs and Marie's voice."

Dimberg told Reuters the group is currently working on a new LP to follow their hit Album "Look Sharp," and would tour the world after it was finished.

Fredriksson and Gessle continue to live in Sweden despite the country's crippling high taxes which have prompted many other artists to move to tax havens abroad.

"Gessle says money is not what drives him to write hits.

"Do I dare that what intrigues me most about music is the feeling to belong to it... money is fun, sure, but it is the feeling which gives the most," he said.

Muscle strength

Olds can have

CHICAGO, June 17, (AP) Pumping iron in the geriatric set does not necessarily mean gulping down vitamins.

Researchers say that giving frail 90-year-olds a regimen of high-intensity weight-training can dramatically increase their muscle strength and may help them avoid accidents associated with weak muscles.

The findings, reported in Wednesday's journal of the American Medical Association, are based on a study of 10 residents of a Boston nursing home, ages 86 to 96.

"Our findings suggest that a portion of the muscle weakness attributed to aging may be modifiable through exercise," wrote the researchers, led by Dr. Maria Fiatarone of the US Department of Agriculture's human nutrition research center on aging at Tufts University in Boston.

"Because muscle strength decreases by perhaps 30 per cent to 40 per cent during the course of the adult life span, it is likely that at the end of training these subjects were stronger than they had been many years previously," the researchers wrote.

They called it the first study to examine the effects of weight-training in such an old population. But Kim Herling, who works with the elderly as director of cardiovascular rehabilitation at the University of Chicago medical center, said the number of subjects in the study was too small to apply to the general population.

"The last thing you'd want to have happen is a group of 60- to 90-year-old people going out and weight-lifting because of the risk of injury," Ms. Herling said. She said elderly people who want to lift weights should consult a physician.

During the study, conducted in the summer of 1989, six women and four men participated in an eight-week weight-training programme that focused on the quadriceps muscle at the front of the thigh. Three times a week, for eight weeks, the subjects performed leg lifts with weights for about 45 minutes a session.

By the end of the eight-week training period, the nine subjects who completed the study had at least doubled the amount of weight they could lift, and some had tripled and quadrupled that amount, said Ms. Fiatarone.

The average increase in single-leg exercise went from 16 pounds (7.2 kilograms) at the beginning to about 42 pounds (19 kilograms) by the end of the training, she said.

One 86-year-old man stopped after weeks because of pain at the site of a previous hernia. The rest completed the training with little pain and no injuries, the researchers said.

They called the results "remarkable" considering the subjects' age and poor health condition at the start of the study. Seven had arthritis, six had heart disease, and four had hypertension.

The subjects stopped weight-lifting at the end of the eight-week period, and four weeks later, they had lost about one-third of the strength they had gained, Ms. Fiatarone said.

A similar loss would be expected in a younger person, she said, noting that for the results to be lasting, weight-training must be done on a long-term basis.

Although the study focused only on leg muscles, Ms. Fiatarone said it can be assumed weight-training also would strengthen upper-body muscles in the elderly.

to look perfect and Madonna lights like a dream. There was definite concern about the way Warren looked."

As the film progressed, Beatty's looks became more and more an obsession. After the film was finally finished, they went back to the studio to reshoot some of Beatty's close-ups.

The wear and tear on his aging matinee-idol look was aggravated by the fact that Madonna dragged him around the Hollywood club circuit night after night.

"He'd come in looking like hell," said a crew member. "The same thing used to happen with Jack (Nicholson) and Anjelica (Huston). These guys aren't getting any younger and trying to keep up wears them out."

Nobody takes better care of himself than Beatty. He eschews booze and drugs, drinks mostly Evian, eats lightly and works out diligently. But he's an obsessive worker. Given the chance, he'd do everything on the film himself from designing the posters to selling the popcorn in the cinema lobby.

"On this one he was literally doing five jobs at once," said an aide about Beatty who produced, directed and starred in *Tracy*. "By the second week of shooting he was completely exhausted."

Beatty has a lot riding on how "Dick Tracy" is received by the public. He has tried to weigh the odds in his favour by getting pals such as Dustin Hoffman, Al Pacino and James Caan to play Tracy's various nemesis. Although the actor listed in the credits as playing nightclub owner Big Boy Caprice is Guido Francati, those in the know confirmed it to be Pacino. Hoffman and Caan, neither of whom get credit on the big screen, play bad guys Mumbles and Spud Spaldoni, respectively.

In Hollywood circles the word is all is well, although there has been talk that some audiences in Los Angeles booted at the movie's trailer. Another less-than-positive report said that at sneak previews the climactic *Tracy*/Breathless dramatic scene drew laughs. But most who have seen the film report that *Tracy* is original, inventive and daring and that Beatty and Madonna general enough heat to short-circuit *Tracy*'s famous wrist radio.

Their off-screen romance has apparently cooled. Reportedly Madonna and Beatty have gone their separate ways and rumours claim Madonna waved goodbye first.

Let's hope, for Beatty's sake, that the public is less fickle.

BLONDIE

By Dean Young & Stan Drake



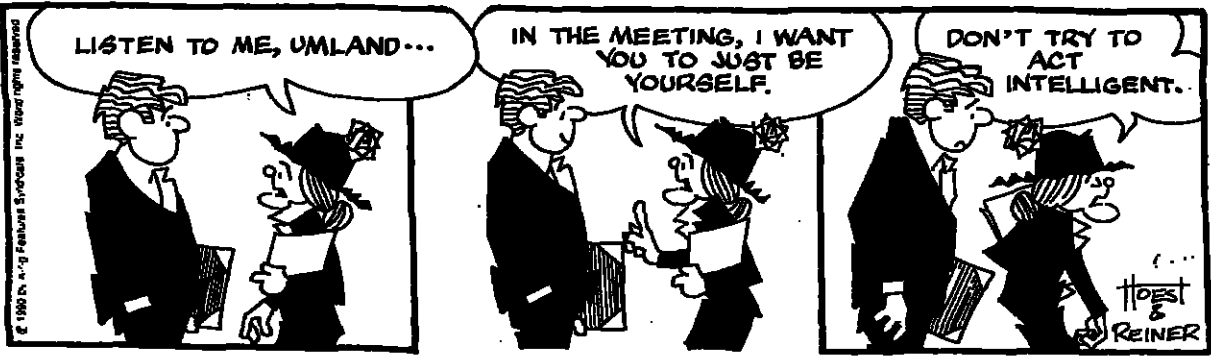
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

By Mark Garry



AGATHA CRUMME

By Mark Garry



BEETLE BAKER

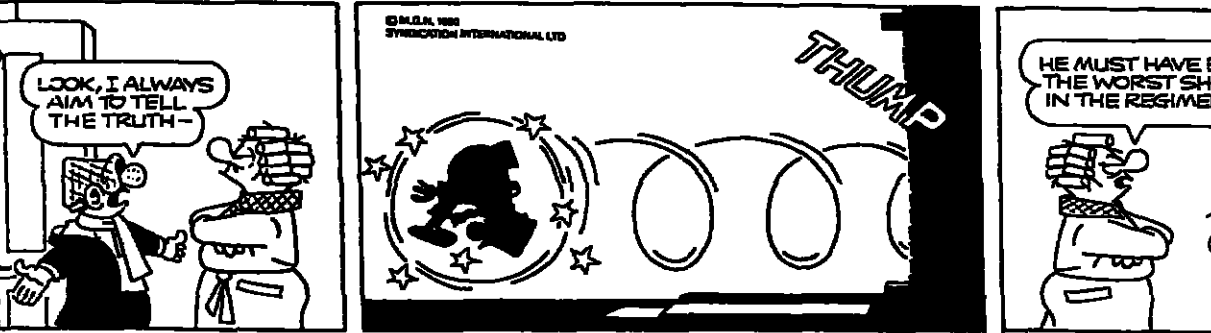


THE WIZARD OF ID

By Mark Garry

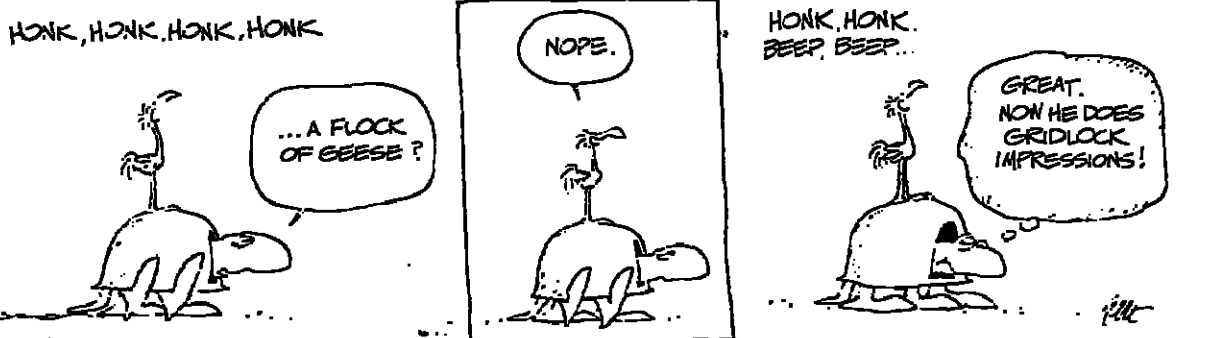


ANDY CAPP



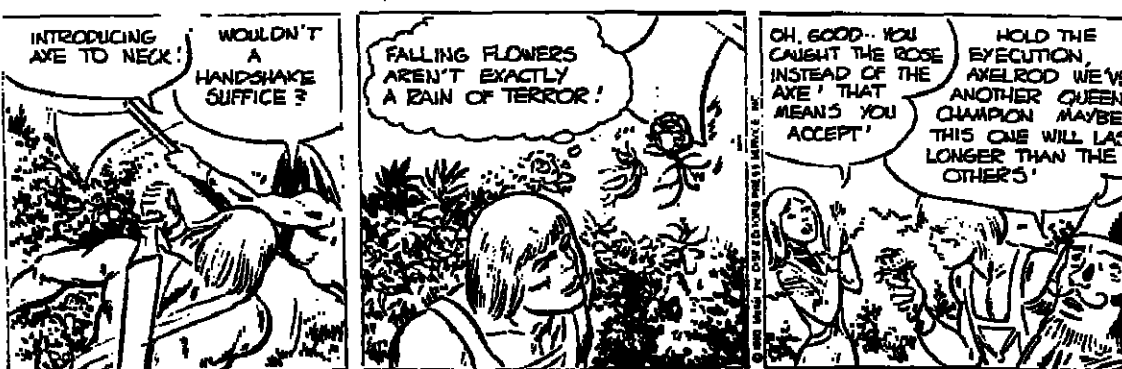
B.C.

By Johnny Hart

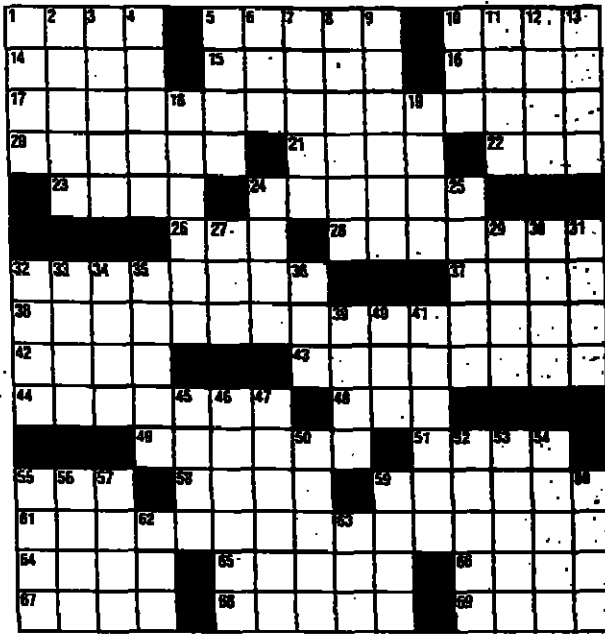


HE-MAN

By G. Forton & J. Shull



TODAY'S CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Dingle
- 5 Manila hemp
- 10 Gibson and Allen
- 14 Jai
- 15 Berlin's "Call Me"
- 16 "Thanks"
- 17 CHERRY
- 20 Extra tires
- 21 Detective Wolfe
- 22 Unused
- 23 Part of QED
- 24 Reef builders
- 26 Family mem.
- 28 Unexpected hit
- 32 Pacific
- 37 Leaping
- 38 STRAWBERRY
- 42 Boxing match
- 43 Keyboard instruments
- 44 Certifies
- 48 Double curve
- 49 Enjoy a book again
- 51 Fleshy unit
- 55 Physicians' org.
- 58 Paper measure
- 59 Wiped out
- 61 ORANGE
- 64 go brag
- 65 Dormouse
- 66 Psyches
- 67 Actor
- 68 "Sesame Street" character
- 69 Playing cards

DOWN

- 1 Touches gently
- 2 Emulate Romeo and Juliet
- 3 Truman's birthplace
- 4 Astrological sign
- 5 Coach Stage

ACROSS

- 6 Resounding sound
- 7 Hersey's "A Bell for"
- 8 Provides food for a party
- 9 Ethically neutral
- 10 Wrestling area
- 11 North Carolina colleges
- 12 Word with Ranger or Eagle
- 13 Hodgepodge
- 18 Group of four
- 19 Platform for a pump?
- 24 Skelton's Kadiddlehopper
- 25 Markets
- 27 Siam or Japan ending
- 29 Kind of moss
- 30 Resort town in Sicily
- 31 The Pied Piper's followers
- 32 Eastern bishop's title

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

MALE TAILS LIVES
AGAR ARRAN NEAR
JOHN DICKSON CARB
AGRIE SERIALITY
SLUB REP
COP APLE SALTED
AHA NORMS LAVA
RAYMOND CHANDLER
OREO SEATO ERI
LARIAT ELAN SYN
LOO ENCE
ADDRESSABLE OMBRE
DASHIELL HAMMETT
ALSO OILED ATRE
MIAS REAM'S SASS

POINT COUNTERPOINT

Both vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH
♦ Q 7 5
♦ 8
♦ A Q 10 9 7
♦ A K 10 6

WEST
♦ J
♦ A J 10 9 7 6 4
♦ 6
♦ Q J 9 4

EAST
♦ 10 6
♦ K 5 2
♦ 8 4 3 2
♦ 8 7 5 2

SOUTH
♦ A K 9 8 4 3 2
♦ Q 3
♦ K J 5
♦ 3

The bidding:
West North East South
4♥ Pass 4♠ Pass
Pass 6♠ Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♠
There are some hands where only an expert can go down! If you don't believe us, study this deal from the Masters' Pairs Championship more than a quarter of a century ago and see if you can work out how declarer, a nationally-ranked player, was defeated in his spade slam after the lead of the ace of hearts.

Certainly, you can't quibble with

the auction, unless you feel that North might have checked for aces in case his side could make a grand slam. When it comes to the play, however, you will have to make up your own mind.

West led the ace of hearts and East dropped the king! On the heart continuation, declarer took the precaution to ruff with dummy's queen and was taken aback when East produced a second heart. Had declarer now claimed his contract, it is just possible the opponents would have conceded, but declarer's mind was working overtime.

Why had East falsecarded with the king of hearts? South concluded there could be only one explanation: East held all three missing trumps, and was hoping to set up a trump trick for himself by inveigling declarer to ruff high.

Having worked that out, declarer was ready to produce his own brilliancy. He led a trump from the table and, when East produced the six, declarer confidently finessed the eight! The logic was almost irrefutable. Unfortunately, West won the trick with the jack—down one!



"Open your mouth."

YOUR HOROSCOPE

Aries
March 21 - April 19

You will tend to be rather discontented and should try to look on the bright side. You will not have time to do all you would like to do, but you should not miss out what you have to do. Avoid eating more than you know is good for you. Be fair.

Cancer
June 21 - July 20

Do not allow your emotions to spill over but do not suppress them either. Make sure you are sitting comfortably and that you get enough rest. Think of others as well as of yourself. Be resolute.

Libra
Sept. 21 - Oct. 22

There will be some ups and downs but on you will also have good cause for satisfaction. There is nothing to be gained by waiting and seeing. You will be able to make some changes but do ensure that they are for the better. Be tactful.

Capricorn
Dec. 21 - Jan. 19

Your enthusiasm is tending to flag and you should use every opportunity to rekindle it. What you had high hopes of will prove to be disappointing. Beware of acting on false assumptions and do check your facts. Be prompt.

Taurus
April 21 - May 20

You are liable to leave a key behind, perhaps locking yourself out, so take special care. And ensure you do not mislay any personal belongings. Your lucky numbers are 8 and 22. Do not try to be too clever. Be magnanimous.

Leo
July 21 - Aug. 22

Do what you think is right not what you think is likely to curry favour. You will tend to be more easily so do what is important first of all. Think a little longer and harder before you act. Be determined.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Take care you do not drop or otherwise damage a small but essential spare part. Do not allow yourself to be excessively influenced by fashion dictates or advertising. And do more of what you think is right less of what is regarded as proper. Be moderate.

Aquarius
Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Instead of always thinking how much better off you could be, think of how much worse things might have been. Do not act on the spur of the moment, but on the other hand do not hesitate—if you do it could be too late. Avoid being a nuisance. Be reliable.

Gemini
May 21 - June 20

You are more likely to get into a muddle so take some time to tidy up. Keep your eyes and ears wide open you are liable to be fooled. Have a little more faith and confidence in yourself. Be sincere.

Virgo
Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

You should not be so ready to criticise other and do not be too haughty to accept criticism. Nor should you be too right to act upon good advice. If you insist on getting your own way you will be disappointed. Be glad.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

You are more prone to mistakes and should be on the lookout for them. Avoid taking things for granted and do not expect too much from others. Nor should you rely on good luck to solve a problem for you. Be less negligent.

Pisces
Feb. 19 - March 20

You will be able to do something to further your cultural interests. Take sufficient exercise, but do not go to the point where you exhaust yourself. A temptation to spend more than you know you should must be resisted. Be generous.



"Be careful what you say around him. He's not as dumb as he looks."



"Can I kiss one of the bridesmaids instead?"

LAUGOLITA

Special Report on Aids

No cure, vaccine around the corner

By Rebecca Kolberg

WASHINGTON, (UPI): Just a few years ago, the big question surrounding development of a cure or a vaccine for Aids was, "can it be done?" Now, leading Aids researchers say the question has shifted to "When will it be done?"

But, barring a scientific miracle or a major trick up the sleeve of polio vaccine pioneer Dr. Jonas Salk, the "when" apparently will not be in time for the Sixth International Aids Conference in San Francisco, and may also come far too late to help hundreds of thousands of people already infected.

"I am not anticipating any major breakthroughs... If anyone is looking at the conference with the idea that a cure is going to be released at that time, that won't happen," said Dr. Mervyn Silverman, president of the American Foundation for Aids Research, a co-sponsor of the meeting.

About 12,000 scientists, health care workers and Aids activists from around the world are expected to attend the June 20-24 conference, considered the premier research meeting on Aids. Another co-sponsor, the University of California-San Francisco, a major research center in the battle against Aids, accepted about half of some 4,900 scientific papers submitted world-wide to the conference.

The early years of the Aids epidemic, which first emerged in 1981, were marked by major scientific strides — the discovery of the Aids-causing human immunodeficiency virus or HIV, creation of a blood test to detect HIV and development of AZT, the first drug to slow the disease, which destroys the body's ability to fight infection.

But since AZT's approval in 1987, Aids research has grabbed fewer headlines and the advances have been less dramatic, slowly building upon each other step by step.

Dr. Robert Gallo, who co-discovered the Aids virus with Luc Montagnier in 1983, told the recent Art Against Aids Benefit that the scientific struggle to beat the disease has "somewhat plateaued, research is getting increasingly difficult."

"Drugs are slow, slower that anticipated. We have to do a lot more," Gallo said.

To date, AZT or Zidovudine remains the only government-approved drug to directly attack the Aids virus, which the World Health Organization estimates has infected at least six million people world-wide.

But US Food and Drug Administration spokesman Brad Stone said he has seen no plateau in the pace at which companies are submitting potential treatments for approval.

About 100 drugs to treat Aids and the ailments that kill many of those infected, such as pneumonia and rare cancers, are being tested in humans, and about 30 of those drugs have already cleared early safety tests, Stone said.

Although Aids activists have accused scientists of taking a "cold and calculated approach" that moves too slowly to help people infected with the deadly virus, Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said, "The pain and suffering touches us all... We will not rest until this terrible epidemic is under control."

In the United States, Europe and Asia, the Aids virus, which is spread by sexual or blood-to-blood contact, has primarily affected homosexual men and intravenous drug users. But in parts of Africa, the deadly illness strikes men and women about equally and is widespread throughout urban society.

During the 1990s, Fauci said biomedical science probably will be able to render Aids a "controllable, chronic disease," much like diabetes or haemophilia.

"I think the next year or two are going to be quite exciting in terms of things (Aids drugs) brought into the clinic," said Dr. Robert Yarchoan, an Aids drug expert at the Cancer Institute. "A large number of things should start to bear fruit over the next couple years."

Long-awaited preliminary reports of human tests of the experimental anti-Aids drugs AZDoudine or AZDZ and Dididehydroxythymidine or DDT will be presented at the San Francisco meeting, Yarchoan said.

In the past year, several large pharmaceutical firms have designed a new breed of drugs that appear to have the power to attack the Aids virus on a different front. The designer compounds block protease, an enzyme the Aids virus needs to reproduce.

Another drug class to watch is the so-called tibo derivatives, compounds that closely resemble tranquilizing drugs that a Belgian team recently found to be extremely potent blockers of Aids virus reproduction in the test-tube.

As of February, neither protease blockers nor tibo compounds had been tried in humans.

At the Aids conference, many people will be watching for results of early human tests of a genetically engineered therapy called CD4-IGG, which combines antibodies with a synthetic version of the chemical door that the Aids virus uses to invade cells.

It is hoped the hybrid will spur an immune reaction and last longer than plain soluble CD4, which, although able to stop up the Aids virus in the test tube, has shown a disappointingly short lifespan in the human bloodstream, limiting its practical use.

The upcoming year should also mark the start of human tests of another important twist on CD4-therapy — CD4-PE, which combines the CD4 molecular



A Romanian baby soon to die from Aids. Some 60 per cent of babies tested for Aids were found to be seropositive, showing symptoms in Romania. Doctors blame the alarmingly high figures on low hygiene in hospitals, re-used hypodermic needles and Aids transmission during transfusions. (file photo)

necessary to wipe out all signs of HIV to prevent infected people from developing life-threatening diseases. "There are many viruses we can live with without problems," he said.

If such a "cure" is achieved by giving a patient a variety of drugs over a long period of time, Yarchoan said researchers must be alert to drug resistance and toxic reactions, a problem also faced by many cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. Further studies of patients who show signs of developing Aids resistance are likely to draw much attention at the Aids conference, he said.

The man who has snared the interest, if not exactly the admiration, of Aids vaccine researchers is Salk, who is using much the same approach he used to develop his landmark polio vaccine in the 1950s in an attempt to vanquish the Aids virus.

Salk stole the show at last year's Aids conference in Montreal by announcing that his vaccine, which employs Aids virus that has been killed, had prevented Aids infection in chimpanzees, and showed hints of slowing disease progression in humans already infected with the Aids virus.

Since then, the flamboyant researcher has not presented further results of the human tests, although he recently received government permission for nation-wide testing of the post-exposure vaccine in HIV-infected people. His research also stirred up controversy when Los Angeles Archbishop Roger Mahony sent a letter to 2,900 healthy priests and nuns asking them to consider volunteering for the Salk Aids vaccine because they were extremely unlikely to be infected with the Aids virus prior to vaccination.

However, the vaccine could potentially backfire and actually cause the deadly illness if all the virus used is not completely killed, a danger that most researchers think would make it too dangerous for widespread use in healthy people.

Theoretically, one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of Aids would be through vaccination. But because the Aids virus is so complex and mutates rapidly, experts at last year's meeting predicted any vaccine is at least five years away.

Attracting less publicity than Salk's work, but probably of greater value in developing a way of protection the average person from Aids, is a growing body of evidence that shows healthy monkeys and chimpanzees can be immunized against Aids-like infections, even when only a small, non-infective piece or "subunit" of the virus is used.

Also encouraging is a recent human study at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine that showed a subunit vaccine can kill Aids-infected cells like a vaccine made from whole live virus. In the past, researchers thought only vaccines made of whole, live virus, which are risky because they may cause the disease they are intended to prevent, could trigger such killing.

In addition to killing HIV-infected cells, the ideal Aids vaccine should trigger the immune system to produce antibodies that can kill free-floating virus in the blood stream. Preliminary results show some subunit vaccines spur such a response.

Dr. Dani Bolognesi, an Aids vaccine expert at Duke University School of Medicine in Durham, North Carolina, said the recent animal findings, coupled with the early results in humans, indicate an effective Aids vaccine will likely consist of a "cocktail" of various HIV subunits.

"There is much more enthusiasm for this (Aids vaccine research) than there has been, more interest and more investment. With a little luck, maybe we will be able to shorten the time it takes to develop a good Aids vaccine. Money is never enough by itself, we always need luck too," Bolognesi said.

More volunteers needed

By John M. Leighty

SAN FRANCISCO, (UPI): Hit hardest by the Aids epidemic in the United States, San Francisco has been thrust into the forefront in the battle against the deadly disease since the epidemic began.

More than 5,700 of the 740,000 residents of this picturesque city have died from Aids since the first cases began appearing a decade ago, and another 8,700 have been diagnosed with the illness and as many as 35,000 residents may be infected with the virus that destroys the body's immune system, leaving victims defenseless against devastating infections.

"I think there's a real tiredness that exists," said Holly Smith, who works at the Shanti Project, one of the many agencies that have sprung up to help care for Aids patients.

"I think now in San Francisco we are overwhelmed with a certain amount of Aids overwhelm and grief and loss that is real. It seems like it's been a long haul," said Smith.

Although Aids activists have accused scientists of taking a "cold and calculated approach" that moves too slowly to help people infected with the deadly virus, Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said, "The pain and suffering touches us all... We will not rest until this terrible epidemic is under control."

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"But that's not to say there's not a phenomenal amount of energy out there," she said, noting that some 5,000 volunteers have come forward to help in all aspects of services since the epidemic started.

With a major conference on Aids beginning June 20, homosexual and lesbian activists are using the occasion to protest immigration policies that restrict entry visas to the United States for homosexuals and those carrying the Aids virus.

Dozens of San Francisco-area groups are boycotting the sixth International Conference on Aids to protest the immigration policies, but there are mixed feelings because the activists are not against the conference itself, which is attracting health experts from around the world.

"The boycott is not like a strike, intended to shut the conference down. No one wants to do that," said John James, editor of Aids Treatment News. "The boycott's main purpose, beyond bringing pressure to change US policy, is to make the statement that the entry restrictions are unacceptable, and here it has succeeded."

The day after the conference begins, an annual Gay Freedom Day parade is expected to draw 100,000 participants — from the bizarre to the political.

One of the parade's themes will be the need for more money to fight Aids in its early stages and to provide help to those disabled by the disease, which has killed 80,500 people nationwide.

"There is a certain level of frustration and disappointment that funding cycles have not been appropriately addressed. There's not enough money yet for education and support services," Smith said.

Despite the community response, she said, at Shanti there are now some 100 Aids sufferers on a waiting list for volunteers to give them practical and emotional support as they fight for their lives.

Both Johnston and Yarchoan said they know of no drug, even among compounds in the earliest stages of development, that appears to have the power to completely cure an Aids infected person, if a cure is defined as eliminating every last trace of HIV from the body.

But Yarchoan noted it may not be necessary to wipe out all signs of HIV to prevent infected people from developing life-threatening diseases. "There are many viruses we can live with without problems," he said.

If such a "cure" is achieved by giving a patient a variety of drugs over a long period of time, Yarchoan said researchers must be alert to drug resistance and toxic reactions, a problem also faced by many cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. Further studies of patients who show signs of developing Aids resistance are likely to draw much attention at the Aids conference, he said.

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Epidemic strains

By Peg Byron

NEW YORK, (UPI): The lifeblood of many Aids programmes is thousands of volunteers who continue to labour, sometimes until their own deaths, in a tragic world seemingly invisible to many US citizens.

But now, nearly a decade after the first case of Aids came to light, many dedicated activists are concerned about who will help meet the growing needs of the relentless epidemic.

Death continues to claim leaders and experienced activists from the ranks. For example, at the People With Aids Coalition, all but two of the nine founding members have died over the past five years.

"Aids is part of everything I do. It feels overwhelming," said Heidi Dorow, 25, who devotes about 20 hours a week to New York's Aids coalition to unleash power, known as 'Act Up.'

"It's like, my life. It takes up most of my free time," said Dorow. "It's so funny to call it volunteer work. It's activism, gay and lesbian visibility activism."

A seven-year volunteer with the nation's largest Aids service group, Gay Men's Health Crisis, Jon Knowles says his involvement was triggered by tragedy in his personal life but unexpectedly made him happier as a gay man.

Knowles, 46, explained: "It just renewed by faith in human beings and made me more accepting of myself. I was taught that gay men are sissies, selfish, arrogant, miserable people. That has not been my experience."

Joseph Ripple, co-ordinator for GMHC's 1,700 volunteers, said New York's volunteer effort appears to be thriving despite the adversity.

"It's true it's falling down in San Francisco, but it's not falling down in New York," he said.

About 500 people regularly attend the boisterous Monday meetings held by New York's Act Up, which has spawned chapters in two dozen cities, including Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, even London, Paris and Sydney.

But battle fatigue still is taking its toll. Many activists became involved after such drugs as AZT were found to extend the lives of Aids patients, raising optimism. Now they are watching people die despite the drugs.

"I think Keith Haring's death made it real for a lot of people who wanted to believe they wouldn't die of Aids," said one activist, referring to a well-known New York artist who died earlier this year despite such treatments.

Act up member Mark Harrington wryly observed "Maybe what we need to do is buy a little island in the Caribbean for tired activists to go and recuperate."

New York's pool of active volunteers is reportedly holding steady at about 3,000 to 5,000 for everything from GMHC's comprehensive effort to smaller support groups and unusual patient services such as gourmet food delivery and pet care.

But already, GMHC, has waiting lists of up to six weeks for people with Aids needing help, and the agency is uncertain if it can continue growing with the epidemic.

By last month, there were 26,606 people reported with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome in New York, the largest concentration among more than 130,000 people with Aids nationally.

"Think one of the differences between New York and San Francisco is New York has a higher absolute number of cases, but San Francisco has a higher number per capita," said GMHC spokeswoman Carisa Cunningham.

"The ongoing shock and trauma there is even more intense than here. They have entire neighbourhoods and communities being wiped away," she said.

A looming dilemma is whether dedication born largely from the Gay Civil Rights Movement will survive the second wave of Aids, made up of intravenous drug users, with the most blacks, hispanics and women who catch the deadly illness.

Peter Pan — new darker Broadway version

By G. Luther Whittington

HOLLYWOOD, (UPI): Cathy Rigby became the first US woman to win a gold medal in the World Gymnastic Championships in 1970. Now she's aiming for Broadway in a new, darker version of the musical Peter Pan.

The show, scheduled to hit New York in December, opened at the Pantages Theatre in Hollywood last week as part of a national tour.

Actress Mary Martin won a Tony and an Emmy for bringing an incredible voice to the role in 1955, and Sandy Duncan was widely praised for her energy in a revival of "Peter Pan" in the early 1980s.

Rigby's voice is more than adequate. What's more, the 5-foot (152 cm 100-pound) (45 kg) actress gives Peter Pan an athletic ability only dreamed of by Martin and Duncan. She throws her body into the air for somersaults and flips 100 feet (30 m) above the stage.

Tinkerbell's magic dust is potent stuff.

"Our effects are more daring. I'll spin and dip and do things that other Peter Pans haven't (done) and won't do," said Rigby, a 37-year-old mother of four who calls herself a "natural tomboy."

The 35th anniversary production of Pan also features dance numbers by bands of Pirates and Indians in Never Never Land as well as an alligator with glowing eyes.

Broadway veteran Stephen Hannon, nominated for a Tony for his portrayal of Growlitzer in the original Cats, is the evil, hilarious and completely original interpretation of Captain Hook.

Rigby, who began her acting career soon after leaving gymnastics, has played the role in eight previous productions.

"The reviews were good, so we said, why not a national tour," she said.

Co-produced by her husband, Tom McCoy, the show opened last December in Boston.

While the storyline remains intact, there are some elements of this show that are different.

"What we're trying to do in this show is to give the audience a darker, more dramatic side of Peter Pan," Rigby said.

To that end, Rigby and the producers went back to the original story, penned by Sir James Barrie in the early 1900s, and included many lines never before used in the musical versions.

"One of my favourites, which points up Peter's denial, is when he says, 'to die would be an awfully big adventure.' That's a line no one's ever heard in the show before," she said.

Peter's unwillingness to grow up is something to which Rigby can relate.

Stallone Gets Funny

Sylvester Stallone will star for Walt Disney pictures in Oscar, a farce written by Glen and Les Charles who write and produce the Cheers TV series.

Production of the film will not begin until Stallone completes his contracted action film for Carolco, titled Dead Reckoning.

Oscar is a day-in-the-life story of a man from the wrong side of the tracks who makes good and then throws a swank party where everything falls agonizingly and comically apart.

'Daisy' headed for video stores

This year's Academy Award-winning movie for best picture, Driving Miss Daisy, will put into video stores in August with a retail price tag of \$92.95.

The film, starring Oscar-winner Jessica Tandy and Morgan Freeman, has grossed more than \$102 million domestically and is expected to be one of 1990's strongest rental attractions in the cassette market.

Warner Home Video will mount a national campaign on television newspapers and magazines to promote the availability of the cassette.

'Blondie' feature

Based on the runaway success of Batman and the anticipated success of Dick Tracy, Walt Disney pictures is preparing a feature musical film based on the comic strip Blondie.

Tentatively scheduled to start production next spring for a 1992 summer release, the multimillion-dollar extravaganza will be assigned to writer Alfred Uhry, who won this year's Oscar for screenplay adaptation of Driving Miss Daisy.

The syndicated comic strip, seen in some 2,000 American newspapers, was made into a series of 28 movies beginning in 1938.



Sylvester Stallone: funny role

Sounds great

Folk, African

Various Artists, Urban Africa, Jive Hits Of The Townships (Polygram, 841 470-41).

Miriam Makeba, Welela (Mercury, 838 208-4). From the indignation aroused by the apartheid policies of the South African government comes a call for unity among that country's black majority. And the rallying cry to abolish the racist policies mandated by the white government is not only shouted by black leaders like Nelson Mandela. It is a cause that has made its way for decades into the ethnic music of the black Southern African people.

Urban Africa — Jive Hits Of The Townships and Miriam Makeba's Welela paint a picture of the ethnic and tribal diversity of Southern Africa. Sung in English, various African dialects and Mozambique-Portuguese, the assortment on these two related works (two cuts from Welela appear on Jive Hits are not anti-white. They are pro-human rights).

These African rhythms — heavy on the percussion and strings — include a big of the blues, dance beats, and a very strong reminder that American jazz, R-and-B, rock and pop forms are directly descended from Southern African ethnic music.

Apartheid has given the world music with meaning. Makeba and the other artists in these two collections offer a boppin' beat to keep the revolution moving.

Jazz

George Adams, America (Blue Note, 93896). Whether he is playing on the fringe, straight-ahead of steeped in the blues, George Adams' beefy tenor sax gets right into the heart of the music. His latest recording, a musical salute to America's fundamental values, is both surprising and superb.

Adams, pianist Hugh Lawson, bassist Cecil McBee and drummer Mark Johnson tune themselves into the American spirit going back to colonial days as they explore the music of Stephen Hoster (Old Folks At Home), Francis Scott Key (The Star Spangled Banner) and other American classics.

America The Beautiful, Take Me Out To The Ball Game, You Are My Sunshine, Tennessee Waltz, Georgia On My Mind, and two originals, Motivation and Have You Thanked America.

There is a fine duet between Adams and Lawson on Georgia, while Adams makes The Star Spangled Banner an R-and-B tinged solo vehicle. On several tunes, including his two heart-felt originals, Adams also doubles on vocals.

This is a bluesy celebration of the timeless tunes many generations of Americans have grown up with. Don't miss it.

Classical

Michel Beroff, piano, with Karl Masur, Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig, "The Five Piano Concertos" (EMI, 62542).

We have a winner in the competition to put out the best collection of the great Prokofiev piano concertos.

Number three, the one featured in the movie The Competition, has never sounded better than in his rendition by Michel Beroff. Part of the reason is the quality of the back by East Germany's Gewandhaus Orchestra, whose director Kurt Masur is about to take the reins of the New York Philharmonic.

People who saw two people sitting at the piano in commercials for the film will be surprised to learn that in real life one person is expected to play all that music.

Number one, a single movement work about the length of Rhapsody in Blue, gets a lovely rendition that plays up the memorable opening theme. Number four, for the left hand only, is distinguished by a Masur interpretation that plays up the rhythmic impulse (catch the creeping cat bass in the third movement) while using dynamics to soften the harder harmonies.

Perhaps best of all, these guys somehow find the right thing magic to make the lesser-known second and third concertos sound as good as the famous ones.

Kerala girls to tour US



The ten dancers who will tour the US later this month

Sudarshan Kala Mandir invited

A GROUP of Indian classical dancers from Kuwait are to go on a tour of the United States later this month. The 10 girls, all students of the Sudarshan Kala Mandir, have been invited to take part in the annual National Convention of Keralites (NCK) in North America.

All Kerala groups in North America come under NCK, which represents the Malayalee community living in Canada and US.

Sudarshan Kala Mandir, one of the first classical dance schools to be set up by Kanaka Devi, was invited by the American association.

Several Indian girls have studied dance from Kanaka Devi, who is a trained under gurus in Mysore, Madras and Kerala. She also represented her native Kerala in several youth festivals in India. In Kuwait, she has taken an active part in teaching dance and frequently puts on dance shows at the IAC.

Kanaka Devi has selected 10 best students from over 100 children training under her. The girls participated in a recently held dance contest and won in all the seven categories of the competition. They are: Bobby Krishnan, Sudha Pillai, Vineeta Vasudevan, Reshmi Ramankutty, Sunila Philipose, Sujara Rajgopal, Bindu Thomas, Bindu Rajappan, Keena Michael and Archana Nair.

They will be performing in four US cities — Orlando, Miami, Houston and Dallas — before an estimated 5,000 people.

Their programme comprises both Bharata Nartam and Mohiniyattam dance numbers.

More than 5,000 Keralites are expected to attend, including Indian Minister K.P. Umikrishnan, former minister M.M. Jacob, and a host of other eminent personalities from Kerala.

The annual convention, which this year will be held in Orlando from June 29 to July 2, also marks the bi-centennial of the arrival of the first Indian to the US.

This is the first time that Keralites from Kuwait are participating in the event.



Kanaka Devi.



Sudha Pillai.



Bobby Krishnan.



Vineeta Vasudevan.

Graduation ceremony

THE English School, Fahaeel, recently held its annual graduation ceremony for Junior 4 students. A variety show was held by the students. School director Ibrahim Shuhaiber welcomed Education Ministry officials, including Dr Yacoub Al Sharrar, assistant under-secretary for private education, British Ambassador Michael Weston and a large number of dignitaries were also present. It was announced that from the next academic year 1990/91, the school will be introducing Senior One classes.



British Ambassador Michael Weston, Dr Yacoub Al Sharrar and Ibrahim Shuhaiber and other guests pictured during the rendition of the national anthem.



Some of the students.



Dr Al Sharrar shakes hands with a student before giving her the certificate.



Japanese travel agents pictured during their recent Gulf visit organised by Cathay Pacific.

Travel brief

A GROUP of leading Japanese travel agents, who specialise in business to the Middle East, spent several days recently in Bahrain, Dubai and Sharjah on a study tour sponsored by Cathay Pacific in Japan. The group visited a number of scenic and historic places in the three destinations to learn about travel potential first hand. The group also attended a seminar in Bahrain organised by Cathay's regional office at which prominent Japanese expatriates living on the island briefed them on social and economic aspects of the region. The group inspected hotels and shopping centres and were given information on the extensive facilities available to travellers visiting Bahrain and the UAE. Accompanying the group throughout their stay was Masahiko Inoue, Cathay's Bahrain-based Japanese sales representative for the Middle East and India.

TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

KTV 1

9.00 Holy Quran
9.15 Nabia Wa Saleh: cartoon serial
9.40 Ifrah Ya Simsim
10.10 Good Morning
10.30 Ahlam Al Zahira: Arabic serial; part 9, featuring Majdi Wahba, Karima Mukhtar, Madiha Hamdi, Ibrahim Al Shami
11.15 News Summary
12.00 Al Rasheed Al Barad: Arabic serial; part 9; featuring Mahmood Saeed, Shafiqah Al Taji, Fuad Al Shomili

1.20 Songs
1.30 Sanavar: cartoon serial
2.00 News in Arabic
2.15 Ailah Bu Jassoum: Kuwaiti serial; ep. 9; featuring Hussain Qattan, Abdul Wahab Dosari, Moosa Al Hazim

3.35 Shiqawah Fi Sabeen: Arabic feature film, starring Kamal Shinnawi, Hala Fuad, Hussein Sharbini

5.30 Sally: cartoon serial
6.00 Mama Anisa Wa Sighar

7.30 Songs
8.15 Quran and Science: presented by Dr Ahmad Shawki Ibrahim

9.00 News in Arabic
9.45 Rajul Wal Qataar: Arabic serial; last episode; starring: Farouk Fishawi, Hala Sudqi

11.15 Nukhta Alal Harf: variety show, prepared and presented by Marwan Sawwaf

12.15 News Summary
12.20 World News Via Satellite

12.35 Holy Quran/Closedown



Alaf Shuaib stars in Nukhta Alal Harf, KTV 1

KTV 2

6.00 Holy Quran
6.10 Hair Bear Bunch: cartoons

6.30 Animals of Africa: "The Impalas"

7.00 Roving Report: weekly roundup of Arab and world news

7.30 Charles-in-Charge: "Dorm Warning". Charles wins the "student of the year" award and moves to the college dormitory.

8.00 News in English
8.40 Around the World: takes you on a whirlwind global tour.

9.00 The Equalizer: "The Mystery of Manon". Part 2. While Robert McCall looks for his missing son, a Russian agent comes on the scene. Starring: Edward Woodward.

10.00 You Can't Take It With You: "Alice, Loves Tony". Alice falls in love and it seems she is serious about Tony until they fall out over a trivial matter. Comedy.

10.30 Classic Colour Movies: "The Hook". Starring: Kirk Douglas, Robert Walker.

12.00 News in Brief
12.10 Magazine D'Actualite/Closedown

Sports Channel Channel 8/45

9.00 pm Sports Review
10.00 World Cup: Romania vs Argentina (Live)
12.10 World Cup: Cameroon vs Soviet Union (replaying)

Please note that Kuwait Television programmes and timings are liable to change without notice.

Pakistan Arts Circle membership campaign

June 30: The initial membership campaign of the Pakistan Arts Circle (veterans) will end on June 30 to prepare for elections of a new executive committee. All Pakistanis are invited to join the PAC by completing the membership form. PAC membership is open to any Pakistani wishing to join the group at any time. For details call: 5716388; 5631815; 4843578; 2414570.

Pakistanis Welfare Society
June 19: 5.30 pm. The monthly meeting of Pakistanis Welfare Society will be held at the residence of Liaquat Ali. Members are requested to come on time.

Festival on Ice
June 18-24: Ice Capades present Festival on Ice at the Ice Skating Rink. Two shows daily. Afternoon show features Barbie Doll. The evening show features figure skating champions and exhibition show. Twenty world class skaters promise family entertainment. For reservations Tel. 2530000/2533000

Overseas students party
June 27: 6 pm. British Council will hold a reception for all students who will be studying in the UK this autumn. The party will be for all students who have been offered a place at any university, polytechnic or college in Britain.

A set of briefing notes will be given to each student. Refreshments will be served. Students going to the UK are asked to call in to collect free admission cards from Kate or Lix in the

Education Office, British Council, 2 Al Arabi St., Mansouriya.

D'Assail Association celebrates 10th anniversary
Oct 4: Holy mass at 6.30 pm at the Holy Family Cathedral, Kuwait City, followed by a social at 8.30 pm at the Mesliah Beach Hotel. For more details please contact Tel. No. 2469811/12 or 3717346 after 5.30 pm.

At Ramada Al Salam
Al Bender Coffee Shop: Arabic and Continental buffets, lunch and dinner; also a la carte; open 6 am to midnight.

Al Mawardi Open-Air Cafe: open from 6 pm to midnight.

Al Gandouli Grill Garden: open after 6 pm; grilled food.

Friday brunch: 12 noon to 3 pm, ship discovery tour, entertainment for children and cartoon-strip characters.

At the Mesliah Beach
Al Mubarakiah: open around the clock; seafood promotion on Wednesdays, 7 pm; Fridays — Middle Eastern cuisine.

Al Jawharah: Thursday special — special menu; music by Rainbow Band.

Al Berdowneh: BBQ on Thursday in beach garden restaurant; Lebanese food.

At the Meridian
La Brasserie

Thai Corner: Saturday night. Cowboy Night: Every Sunday, with live country music.

Chinese Corner: Monday night feature.

Greek Taverna: Mediterranean magic with bousouki music.

Indonesian corner: on Wednesdays; food prepared in front of

you. Jazz Night: New Orleans atmosphere on Thursday night.

Friday: Oriental luncheon buffet; family day.

Versailles: Business lunch; and a la carte dinner.

At the Holiday Inn
Al Ahmad Coffee Shop: breakfast, lunch and dinner buffets — Continental and Oriental cuisine.

Al Andalus Supper Club: Arabic Nite, every Thursday; Arabic band entertains guests.

Friday Family Lunch: Disney fantasy on Fridays.

At the SAS
Bistrotto: Sunday/Wednesday — pasta night; Italian music.

Peacock Room: Chinese cuisine; lunch and dinner.

Al Boom: Kuwaiti experience; charcoal grilled food, plus mezzeh buffet.

Cloak snack bar — burgers, french fries, etc.

At the Plaza:
Al Dallah Coffee Shop: international cuisine; open buffet plus menu.

Louluwah Corner: snacks and refreshing summer drinks.

Marco Polo: Italian ambience and cuisine, particularly pasta.

British Council
June 16/17: 6.30 pm. "34 Charing Cross Road", a universally acclaimed film based on the true story of Helene Hanff (Anne Bancroft) will be shown.

It tells the story of a 20-year love affair with the staff of a second-hand bookshop. For reservations call 2515512; 2533204; 2533227.

PRAYERS

Fajr	3.13 am
Zuhr	11.49
Asr	3.23 pm
Maghreb	6.50
Isha	8.22

All entries for the What's On column can be sent by telex (22332) to Events Section or hand delivered daily, except Thursdays, from 12 noon to 4 pm, at the Arab Times Office in Shuwaikh. Photographs will also be considered for publication. Phoned-in entries will not be accepted.

CINEMA TODAY

Al Andalus
Al Raqassah Wal Siyasi (Arabic)
Starring: Nabila Obaid, Salah Qabil
Al Salmiya
Hanafi Al Abahu (Arabic)
Starring: Adel Imam, Huda Rana
Al Hamra
Ana Wal Azzab Wa Huwak (Arabic)
Starring: Waleed Tawfiq
Drive-In
Al Raqassah Wal Siyasi (Arabic)
Al Firdous
Subah-o-Sham (Hindi)

Starring: Waheeda Rehman, Sanjeev Kumar
Fahaeel Open-Air
Rastey Pyar Ke (Hindi)
Al Fahaeel
Dream team
Al Jahra
Panic in the Casino
Granada
The Untouchables

Salaikhah
Calibre 357
Al Jeeb
Nair Sabab (Malayalam)
Starring: Mammootty
Ahmadi Drive-In
Seven Red Berets

ARAB TIMES Classifieds

MARKET PLACE

Al Ibrahim Taxi
Tel. 2400013,
2400014, 2400015
Farwaniya branch
Tel. 4745800,
4745900

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pool
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2451489 - 2451476
FAX 2403260
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ACCOMMODATION

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MISHRIF, new villa, CAC. Ground floor 4 bedrooms, hall, saloon, 3 bathrooms, kitchen including multi-ha and garden. First floor — 6 bed rooms, hall and kitchen. Tel: 9022773, 2669162.

(AT3-53233-3)
FLOOR in deluxe villa in Surra, near American, English and French schools. 4 bedrooms, 1 dining room, 2 living rooms, 3 bathrooms, 1 maid room, CAC, with tile and carpet. Private entrance, with garden. Tel: 5315539.

Available

SHARING accommodation available in Salmiya near Indian School. Contact: 5620664, after 3 pm.

(AT1-53213-3)
QADISIYA Block 8, Street 86, House 5. Rooms for family. Contact: Abdul Majeed personally.

(AT3-53245-3)
ACCOMMODATION for a couple, family or working girls to share with an Indian family at Salmiya, Amman Street, Opp. Al Rashid Hospital. Tel: 5627309, 9 am - 10 pm.

(AT2-53215-3)

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Al-Naqab & Khatir
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NAIBA ANG SERBISYO
AT
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Come & see our all-new summer '90 collections. Choose from the collection of world famous brands.
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ACCOMMODATION available for a bachelor to share with bachelors at Salmiya, Amman St. with cook and tele facilities. PLS call 4714707, 8 am - 2 pm and 5639191, 5-10 pm.

(AT2-AD-TM-3)

KUWAIT CITY, Fahed Al Salem Street. Accommodation in a 2-bedroom flat for a working girl to share with a Goan family. Tel: Fernandes 2464368.

(AT2-53209-3)

DASMA, Area 1, Road 18, House No. 4. Room for a family only. Rent KD65 with kitchen, water and electricity facilities. Tel: 2403097.

(AT3-53234-3)

FARWANIYA, behind the Telephone Exchange. 1 room for single Indian bachelor. Rent KD55. Tel: 4714911, ext 42, from 7:00 am - 5:00 pm.

(AT2-53228-3)

INDIAN passport No. G243813 issued on 7.9.89 in Bombay (INDIA) in favour of Shah Prakash Mohanlal from Kuwait Airport at arrival wing on 12.6.89 evening. Finder please contact Mr Deepak. Tel: (OF) 2408110, (Res) 2422387 or Indian embassy.

(AT1-53208-3)

LOST

INDIAN passport No. G243813 issued on 7.9.89 in Bombay (INDIA) in favour of Shah Prakash Mohanlal from Kuwait Airport at arrival wing on 12.6.89 evening. Finder please contact Mr Deepak. Tel: (OF) 2408110, (Res) 2422387 or Indian embassy.

(AT1-53208-3)

FOR SALE

Miscellaneous

PIANO, Rintoul London, made of rosewood, in excellent condition. KD350. Tel: 3720942.

(AT3-53248-3)

NEW Vespa-Piaggio 50cc bike. TV & VCR, fish tank, AC unit two & half ton. Tel: 2443091 (after 6 pm).

(AT2-53211-3)

TOYOTA Cressida '81, white, automatic with AC, in very good condition. KD750. Insured up to January '91. Tel: Edward, 9035062/3, 8 am - 4 pm.

(AT1-53202-3)

MERCEDES 500 SE. Late 1983. Dark blue, full option, sports wheels in immaculate condition. KD4,750 only. Tel: Mr Cross, 2462663, 7 am - 2 pm.

(AT2-53219-3)

NISSAN Liberty, model 83, blue fully automatic, sunroof, hatch-back, 4 doors, air-conditioned, in very good condition. KD650. Tel: 3720942.

(AT3-53248-3)

TOYOTA Crown Supersaloon, model 1981, fully automatic, sky blue, in good condition. Owner leaving. For immediate sale. Price KD650. Call 4319680 any time.

(AT2-53213-3)

BMW 316, 1982 model, automatic. KD750. Tel: 3727676, from 5 - 7 pm only.

(AT6-53184-3)

TOYOTA Cressida GL grey, '86 model in very good condition. Contact: Khaled Tel: 5640800, 4-5 pm: 10 - 12 pm.

(AT2-53218-3)

CAPRICE Brougham, 1986, grey, in immaculate condition with all extras, insured up to 11/90. Price KD2600 or KD69x30 months & KD750 to the owner. Tel: 4836391, 4763322.

(AT3-53237-3)

WANTED

DEAR ladies, I want to buy your old clothes, skirts, dresses and jeans. Tel: for details 2633758.

(AT1-53203-3)

BUYING second-hand books, postage stamps and revenue stamps used and unused. Tel: 3727491.

(AT2-53037-12)

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EXPERT tuition available for maths given by a college lecturer for all classes. Tel: 4318375.

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TWO families leaving Kuwait. Household items for sale, clothes, toys, plants, etc. Bargain prices. Tel: 5625296/5744075.

(AT1-53208-3)

Cars

CHEVROLET Caprice '87 grey, fully automatic, lady driven, in excellent condition for immediate sale. Price KD2,800, negotiable. Tel: 5615527, Mr Bloushi.

(AT2-53224-3)

MERCEDES 300 CE 24 valve 1990 model, full options with sport manual racing gear box. Black metallic. Tel: 9079911, 5316156.

(AT4-53123-6)

MAZDA 626, 1983 first registered in 1984, manual, 5 gears, excellent AC, insured upto May 1991. Owner leaving Kuwait. KD650 only. Tel: 5720133 or 5721077 ext 27 after 2.30 pm, Mr Snow.

(AT1-53132-3)

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(AT1-53202-3)

MERCEDES 500 SE. Late 1983. Dark blue, full option, sports wheels in immaculate condition. KD4,750 only. Tel: Mr Cross, 2462663, 7 am - 2 pm.

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(AT2-53231-3)

FOR RENT

Shilton marks record appearance with faultless display

England hold Dutch to draw



Walker (centre) confronts Gullit (left) as Van Basten sweeps wide. (Reuter wirephoto)



Mark Wright (left) hangs on to Gullit's shirt. (Reuter wirephoto)

CAGLIARI, June 17, (Reuter): England and European champions the Netherlands produced a match of high quality but no goals yesterday and so left World Cup Group F wide open and without any clear favourite for the second round.

Both teams, meeting in the finals for the first time, played with greater style and imagination than they showed in their previous outings against Ireland and Egypt respectively, but the outcome was a tactical stalemate.

England unexpectedly introduced a five-man defensive system for the first time and used the quick Des Walker to mark Marco van Basten, a move which negated the Dutch striker's usual threat.

As a result, the Netherlands were rarely able to penetrate the England defence in which goalkeeper Peter Shilton marked his world record 120th international appearance with a faultless display and several excellent saves.

The Dutch defence was only rarely troubled after the early stages, but England could at least claim to have missed the best opening of the night when the normally deadly Gary Lineker wasted a chance created by John Barnes early in the second half.

Lineker, top scorer in the 1986 finals in Mexico, and Stuart Pearce, also had goals disallowed, but had England won, it would have been an injustice as the Dutch contributed much to a fine game.

For England's supporters,

involved in a series of violent incidents before the match and kept in their seats long after the final whistle, there was some satisfaction in having seen their team enjoy the best of an invigorating and skilful game.

But there were loud jeers at the end when Yugoslav referee Zoran Petrovic disallowed Pearce's injury-time strike. His free-kick beat goalkeeper Hans van Breukelen but it had been adjudged indirect.

The Dutch, particularly in the second half, produced some fine football which showed signs that they may yet be capable of recovering the form which carried them to the European title in 1988.

With Rudi Gullit at the centre of nearly everything they did and his AC Milan team-mates Van Basten and the outstanding Frank Rijkaard also performing with great purpose, the Netherlands could easily have snatched victory had Shilton not been at his most alert.

After a combative opening spell, the Dutch probably enjoyed most of the possession, but failed to break down the central English defensive trio of Walker, Terry Butcher and Mark Wright.

England captain Bryan Robson, who was later substituted by David Platt, flashed an early header wide of a post and both Chris Waddle and John Barnes had good moments.

But in the end England's failure to win was down to Lineker.



Lineker (right) watches as the ball heads towards the Dutch goal. The goal was disallowed. (Reuter wirephoto)

Stars feel at home in World Cup

ROME, June 17, (Reuter): The World Cup finals in Italy will go down as the first in which almost all of the tournament's stars were playing at home.

Many of the talents who emerge at the finals may soon be packing their bags to take up residence in the peninsula, too.

Lothar Matthaus and Rudi Voeller, joint top scorers so far with three goals each, are among a cast of soccer millionaires on parade in Italy who are already well tutored in the art of eating spaghetti.

The West Germans, in the pay of Inter Milan and AS Roma respectively, are just two of 35 foreign players registered with Italian sides in the squads of the 23 teams who joined the host nation in the finals.

Almost 40 per cent of the goals scored in the competition to date have been netted by men who make their living in Italy.

Since reopening the frontier to foreign players 10 years ago after more than a decade in which they were barred, Italian clubs have plundered South America and the rest of Europe to gather the richest possible harvest of soccer skills.

They have succeeded so totally that no-one could contest their claim to have created the best League in the world.

Some of the top names will literally be playing at home in the World Cup.

Diego Maradona, widely regarded as the world's best player, has the support of his own Naples crowd when he appears for Argentina.

Know

Milan fans cheer West Germany when the inter trio of Matthaus, Juergen Klinsmann and Andreas Brehme, three of the best players on view, take the field at the San Siro Stadium where they already know every blade of grass.

But half of the city's football fans, the AC Milan supporters, must watch their adopted Dutch heroes Ruud Gullit, Marco van Basten and Frank Rijkaard on television for the time being. The Netherlands play their group matches in Sicily and Sardinia.

World champions Argentina have seven Italy-based players while West Germany can boast five and Brazil four.

No fewer than eight of West Germany's nine goals have been scored by Italian taxpayers, Brazil have bagged three, two from Carca, Maradona's team-mate at Napoli, and the other from Torino's Muller.

The foreign invasion of the Italian League's rich pastures is unlikely to abate after the finals. West German Thomas Haessler and Karl-Heinz Riedle have already signed for Juventus and Lazio next season and Stefan Reuter will join Haessler in Turin the following year.

Spanish midfielder Rafael Martin Vazquez has agreed to join Torino from Real Madrid. Italian sports papers, alert to every rumour on the transfer front, talk of several deals in the pipeline.

Brazilian stars Bebeto, Jorginho and Mazinho are among those on the wanted list of Italian clubs as are Soviet striker Oleg Protasov and Belgian forward Marc Degryse.

New favourites

LONDON, June 17, (Reuter): British bookmakers Ladbrokes made West Germany the new favourites to win the soccer World Cup yesterday.

Ladbrokes made West Germany, who have won both their games by wide margins, favourites at 9-4 with Italy dropping back to second favourites at 5-2.

It was the first time since last year that Italy have not been favoured.

Shilton keeps another 'clean sheet'

CAGLIARI, June 17, (Reuter): England goalkeeper Peter Shilton yesterday celebrated his world record 120th international appearance in customary style — by not conceding a goal.

Shilton, 40, played with all his usual authority and excellence in the goalless World Cup Group F draw with the Netherlands, but was naturally disappointed England did not win.

"For me personally, it was a big game," he said. "I remember I got my 100th cap for England when we lost 3-1 against Holland two years ago in the European Championship finals."

"Tonight I did not want the same kind of result. We got a draw, but it would have been much better for me if we had won."

The England goalkeeper, who made his debut against East Germany in 1970, refused to comment on suggestions that the players were distracted by the violent incidents in Cagliari which preceded the game.

He said: "We came here to play football. The people who came and caused trouble are not really football fans and have nothing to do with the World Cup."

Cameroon to show no mercy to Soviets

BARI, June 17, (Reuter): Cameroon's Russian manager Valery Nepomniachy will show no mercy to the Soviet Union when the two sides meet in a World Cup Group B match tomorrow.

Cameroon, rank outsiders at the start of the tournament, are sure of a place in the second round after beating Argentina 1-0 and Romania 2-1, while the Soviet Union, once one of the most favoured teams, are likely to be eliminated after two defeats.

But Nepomniachy wants Cameroon to win or draw to take first place in the group and avoid the stronger teams in the next stage.

"Of course, my heart will be with the Soviet team but my head will be with the Cameroon team," Nepomniachy said.

Nepomniachy, who has added discipline to a naturally talented side, said: "It will be an important game for me... after the Argentina match, I thought we had more to give. After Romania, I'm convinced we have more to give."

He has no injury worries and he faces a selection problem that would please any manager.

Cameroon did so well against Romania without first choice players Benjamin Mass-

ing and Andre Kana Biyik, who were suspended after being sent off against Argentina, that Nepomniachy may find it hard to decide who to leave out.

Defender Jules Onana and forward Emmanuel Maboang slotted in well in their place, although Nepomniachy said the team were not at their best.

Roger Milla should play from the start after scoring twice after coming on as a substitute against Romania. But he is likely to keep him on the substitutes' bench to save his legs for the second half.

"We planned it before the (Romania) match. All the players knew he would play in the second half for at least 30 minutes," Nepomniachy said.

The optimism and confidence at Cameroon's hilltop retreat outside the southern city of Bari, where the match will be played, is a sharp contrast to the cloud of despondency hanging over the Soviet team.

Coach Valery Lobanovsky made wholesale changes after his team's lacklustre performance in the 2-0 defeat by Romania in Bari, but they were also beaten 2-0 by Argentina in Naples.

Lobanovsky blamed bad refereeing after Argentine captain Diego Maradona's outstretched arm appeared to deny the Soviet Union a goal.

But there is no hiding the fact that his team are a pale shadow of the one who reached the second round in the Mexico World Cup in 1986 and were runners-up in the 1988 European Championship.

"Every player is capable of playing better and so far they have not shown their true potential," Alexander Turkmanov, head of the Soviet team delegation, said.

He denied rumours of dissent among the disappointed team.

"Lobanovsky is the chief trainer. Everyone trusts him and respects him," Turkmanov said.

Lobanovsky has not said who will play against Cameroon. Romania have to lose and the Soviet Union need to win by a wide margin to have any chance of making the second round as one of the best third-placed teams.

Lobanovsky is again likely to play goalkeeper Alexander Uvarov and midfielder Andrei Zygmantovic. They were brought in against Argentina.

Kick off: Monday, 10.00 pm (Kuwait time)

West Germans go for clean sweep

MILAN, June 17, (Reuter): West Germany, who set a blistering pace in their first two matches, aim to complete a hat-trick of first-round victories against Colombia on Tuesday in their impressive challenge for World Cup glory.

The West Germans are already sure of a place in the second round after overwhelming Yugoslavia 4-1 and the United Arab Emirates 5-1 and look in a class of their own in Group D.

Colombia achieved an uninspiring 2-0 win over the UAE and were beaten 1-0 by Yugoslavia but the West Germans will not take their opponents lightly.

Team chief Franz Beckenbauer has no intention of relaxing the relentless pressure which has marked West Germany out as the side the others will need to beat to win the trophy.

"We cannot afford to be beaten by Colombia. Colombia are an excellent team," he said, judging them better than Yugoslavia for stretches of their last game.

"We have certainly played convincingly. But we must recognise that we haven't played the strongest teams. We must not be casual."

Dope tests

ROME, June 17, (Reuter): A total of 64 players were tested for doping in the first 16 World Cup matches, FIFA said yesterday. None of the tests was positive.

Under FIFA regulations two players from each team are selected at random for testing.

Argentine captain Diego Maradona was among the first players to be picked at random, FIFA said.

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Foreman stops Rodrigues

Tyson KOs Tillman



Mike Tyson (right) delivers a right hook to Tillman's head. (Reuter wirephoto)



Tyson (left) hits Tillman with a jab. (Reuter wirephoto)



Foreman (left) lands a left jab to Rodrigues' face. (Reuter wirephoto)

LAS VEGAS, June 17. (Reuter) Mike Tyson began his comeback bid to regain the world heavyweight title with a vengeance, knocking out fellow American Henry Tillman in the first round last night.

Tillman, unranked and in just his fifth fight in the last two years, was clearly trying only to survive the onslaught from the man he had defeated twice in the 1984 Olympic boxing trials.

In the opening seconds of the scheduled 10-round bout, Tyson appeared to throw more jabs than he had in the entire fight in Tokyo last February when James "Buster" Douglas knocked him out in the 10th round to win the undisputed heavyweight crown.

Tillman essentially landed only one real punch in the fight — an overhand right flush on Tyson's face. But the former champion did not flinch and continued his pursuit.

Tyson laid Tillman out with one crushing punch — a looping right hand to the temple.

Tillman went down like a rock and barely moved, his mouthpiece hanging out, as referee Richard Steele counted him out at two minutes 47 seconds of the round.

"Without a doubt, I'm the best fighter in the universe and I'm coming back to regain the title," Tyson said moments after the fight.

"I didn't have much doubt on the outcome of the fight," Tyson said.

Asked what the easy victory proved, Tyson said: "It helps my confidence. People told me this was going to be a pushover. That's when I worry. They said Buster Douglas was a pushover."

"I'm in shape and can fight anyone in the world," he said.

Tyson, 23, is expected to fight again in September — probably against Alex Stewart of Jamaica.

"You have to stay active," he said, responding to a question about his readiness to fight in September. "I want to fight as often as I can. I prefer to be more active than I have been."

On his feelings about fighting the winner of the scheduled September 21 Douglas-Evander Holyfield title fight, Tyson said: "Regardless (of who wins) it will be a tough fight and after that I'll be there."

Douglas and Holyfield were both at ringside watching Tyson fight last night.

Tyson, whose record is now 38-1, landed 14 of 32 punches in his short evening's work for which he was paid about \$4 million.

The 29-year-old Tillman, paid about \$375,000 to be a confidence-builder for Tyson, is now 20-5.

George Foreman's impossible dream to regain the world heavyweight title remained alive when he knocked out Adilson Rodrigues in the second round of their scheduled 10-round bout last night.

Foreman, 41, set up Rodrigues with two left jabs to the head and put the Brazilian down with a straight right and a left hook.

Rodrigues, 31, struggled to get to all fours and gamely tried to get up by grabbing for the ropes. But the glassy-eyed Brazilian only flailed at the air and fell down again.

Referee Carlos Padilla counted Rodrigues out at two minutes 39 seconds of the second round.

Rodrigues, whose record fell to 36-4, had been ranked 11th by the World Boxing Council and the World Boxing Association.

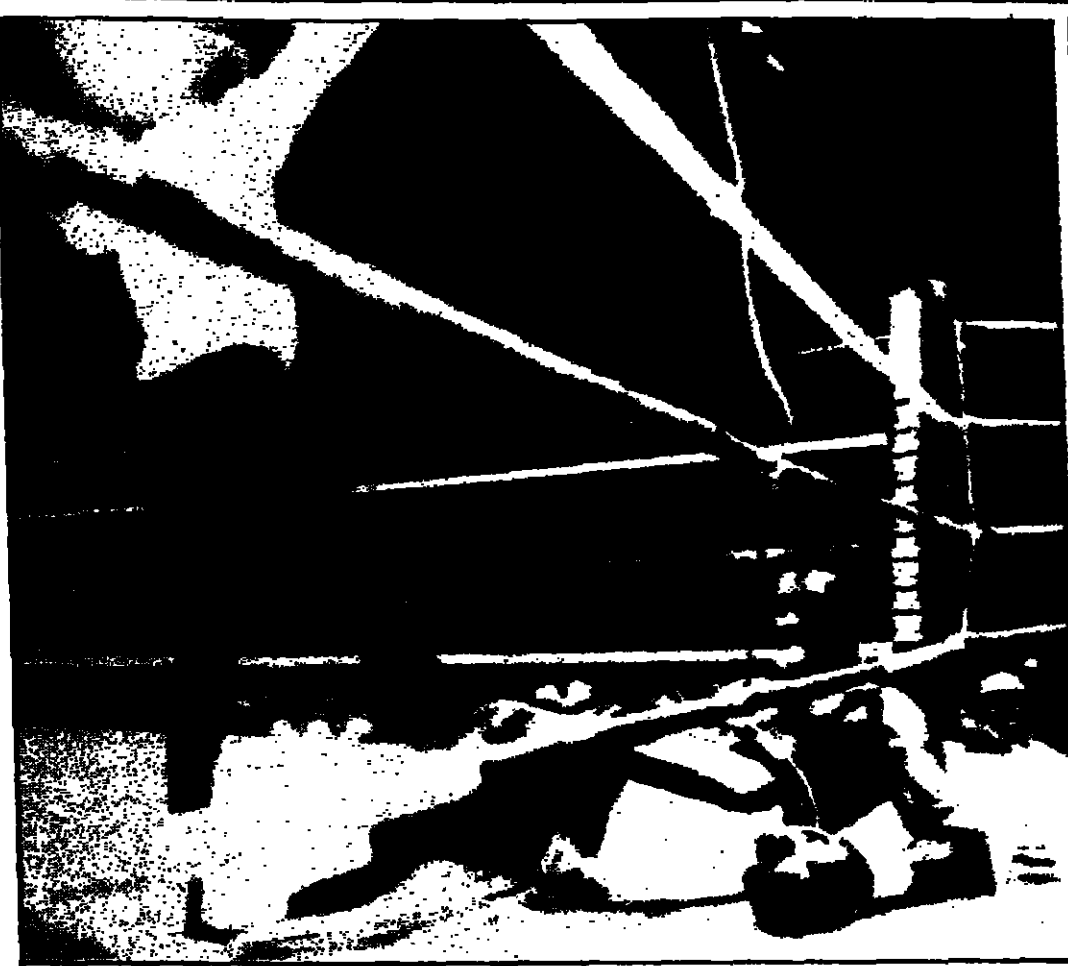
"I expected a lot more than I got," a very relaxed Foreman said afterward. "I didn't expect a quick knockout because I thought he'd be moving more than he did. I thought I'd catch up with him about the seventh round."

"When you get into the ring with an Angelo Dundee fighter, you're halfway scared because you know he's got something up his sleeve," Foreman said, referring to the legendary trainer who was in Rodrigues' corner.

Foreman is now 67-2 overall and 22-0 in the 39 months since he began his unlikely comeback bid to win the world heavyweight title he held in 1974.

Asked how he chooses his opponents these days, Foreman — always looking for a laugh at his own expense — said: "If they can whip my mother they don't go."

"As you get older, you get smarter," said Foreman who bills himself as the standard bearer for the over-40 crowd.



Tillman lies on the canvas as the referee counts him out. (Reuter wirephoto)

Botham hits 113 to rescue Worcester

LONDON, June 17. (Reuter) Former England cricket captain Ian Botham hit his first championship century for three years yesterday to rescue Worcestershire against Surrey.

Botham, overlooked by England for the current Test series against New Zealand, began cautiously after going in to bat with the county champions at 22 runs for 3 wickets.

He hit two sixes and 10 fours in a stay of 221 minutes, the second 50 runs coming in just 58 minutes, before being caught by England batsman Alec Stewart off Keith Medleycott for 113.

Bad light ended play with Worcestershire 263 for seven.

Botham's last championship century was in July 1987 when he hit an unbeaten 126 against his former county Somerset.

John Stephenson smashed a career best 202 not out off Somerset to take Essex to 431 for three at close of play. It was the fourth double century by an Essex batsman this season.

Bill Atkin cracked a superb 131 and England wicket-keeper Jack Russell made 98 in a seventh wicket stand as Gloucestershire recovered from 117 for five to make 374. Sussex survived some hostile bowling to reply with 30 for no wicket by the close.

England batsman Robin Smith scored 153 for Hampshire against Glamorgan at Southampton for his third county championship century of the season. Hampshire declared on 363 for eight, leaving Glamorgan on 31 for one in eight overs.

Results

At Derby: Derbyshire 408 for two (K. Barrett 131, P. Bowler 120, B. Roberts 70 not out, N. Morris 70 not out) v Warwickshire.

At Bath: Essex 431 for three (J. Stephenson 202 not out, P. Prichard 115, G. Cochrane 73) v Somerset.

At Southampton: Hampshire 363 for eight declared in 99.5 overs (R. Smith 153, v. Terry 52, C. Smith 48, D. Gower 41; S. Watkin four for 84). Glamorgan 31 for one in eight overs.

At the Oval: Worcestershire 263 for seven in 52 overs (I. Botham 113, G. Hick 59) v Surrey.

At Hove: Gloucestershire 374 in 97 overs (W. Ashley 131, J. Russell 96, J. Lloyd 43, I. Butcher 42). Sussex 30 for no wicket in 10 overs.

At Leicester: Middlesex 295 in 88.1 overs (D. Haynes 85, M. Ramprakash 87; W. Benjamin five for 73). Leicestershire 38 for one in 18 overs.

Capel hits century off New Zealand

NORTHAMPTON, England, June 17. (Reuter) Discarded England all-rounder David Capel cracked his third century in a week to rescue Northamptonshire with a fighting 123 on the opening day of their three-day match against New Zealand yesterday.

In the absence of the newly-knighted Sir Richard Hadlee, Capel produced a stream of glorious shots against the other New Zealand bowlers after Northants had lost three wickets in making 33.

He and Richard Williams, who made 73, added 167 for the fifth wicket as Northants totalled 279 for nine declared. New Zealand had made 28 without loss in reply at the close.

After making two separate centuries against Glamorgan last weekend it was a timely reminder to the England selectors who have ignored Capel for the first two Tests against New Zealand.

Hadlee never intended playing in this match and instead celebrated his appearance in the Queen's birthday honours list by staying with friends in Nottingham.

Even without the world's leading Test wicket-taker, New Zealand made excellent early progress after losing the toss.

However Rob Bailey was decidedly unlucky when he was out without scoring. Having solidly driven a ball from Jonathan Millmow, he stood transfixed as it ricocheted from Mark Priest's knee at silly mid-off and into the bowler's hands for a bizarre return catch.

Millmow's fortune soon changed, however. The young paceman pulled up sharply midway through his next over with a shin injury, which is likely to rule him out of the rest of this game.

But even that incident rebounded on Northamptonshire. Spinner John Bracewell was called up to complete the over — and his first delivery trapped Alan Fordham leg before for 20.

Scoreboard

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE first innings

A. Fordham lbw b Bracewell 20

N. Felton c Rutherford b Morrison 3

R. Bailey c and b Millmow 0

A. Lamb lbw b Morrison 21

D. Capel c and b Priest 123

R. Williams c Wright b Priest 73

W. Noon lbw b Morrison 2

N. Cook b Priest 10

W. Davies not out 0

C. Ambrose lbw b Bracewell 0

Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-1) 3

Total (for nine wickets declared) 279

Fall of wickets: 1-22 2-23 3-33 4-73 5-240 6-253 7-267 8-274 9-279.

Did not bat: Mark Robinson

Bowling: Morrison 21-4-68-3, Millmow 34-0-16-1, Bracewell 30-9-78-2, Thomson 19-0-85-0, Priest 27-10-35-3.

NEW ZEALAND first innings

T. Franklin not out 16

J. Wright not out 9

Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-1) 3

Total (for no wicket) 28

To bat: Andrew Jones, Mark Greatbatch, Ken Rutherford, Adam Parore, John Bracewell, Shane Thomson, Jonathan Millmow, Danny Morrison, Mark Priest.

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SPORTS BRIEFS

Baseball games

NEW YORK, June 17. (Reuter) Results of Major League baseball games played yesterday.

National League	
Los Angeles	5 San Diego 2
San Francisco	7 Atlanta 0
Cincinnati	6 Houston 2
Philadelphia	2 Chicago Cubs 1
Pittsburgh	11 N.Y. Mets 6
St Louis	5 Montreal 3

American League	
Detroit	6 California 2
Boston	6 Baltimore 3
Kansas City	5 Minnesota 3
Cleveland	10 Milwaukee 9
Toronto	2 N.Y. Yankees 1
Oakland	12 Chicago 3
Seattle	5 Texas 0

Appelgren loses

BALTIMORE, Maryland, June 17. (Reuter) World number one Jan-Ove Waldner of Sweden saved his best performance for last as he defeated countryman Mikael Appelgren 21-16, 20-22, 21-15, 21-16 to win the men's singles title at the US Open Table Tennis Championships yesterday.

Campese returns

SYDNEY, June 17. (Reuter) Wing David Campese, the most prolific try scorer in Test rugby union, was recalled to the Australian team for the second Test against France in Brisbane next Sunday. Campese was left out of the opening international after arriving home late from a season in Italian rugby. He returns in place of Paul Carrizo.

Japan triumph

TOKYO, June 17. (UPI) Japan came from behind today to defeat 5-15, 15-3, 15-4, 15-9 in the final preliminary match in Group B of the first men's World League Volleyball Championships. It was a back-to-back double for Japan, who turned back China 15-10, 15-12, 15-7 yesterday.

Illegal gambling

DETROIT, June 17. (AP) Isiah Thomas of the Detroit Pistons, Most Valuable Player in the just-concluded National Basketball Association finals, hosted high-stakes dice games at his home, according to news reports yesterday. Thomas denied through his agent that he was involved in illegal gambling and would cooperate in an FBI-internal Revenue Service investigation into a gambling ring.

Pole position

DETROIT, June 17. (AP) Michael Andretti wrapped up his second straight Detroit Grand Prix pole yesterday, holding off a determined effort by Al Unser Jr in a wall-banging qualifying battle. Those two, as they did in last year's inaugural IndyCar race through the streets of downtown Detroit, were to start from the front row in today's 62-lap, 155-mile (248-kilometre) race, which will start at 1:15 pm EDT (1715 GMT).

Road relay

TOKYO, June 17. (UPI) The Asian Amateur Athletics Federation will promote an Ekiden road relay between the capital cities of South and North Korea across the 38th Parallel dividing the Korean peninsula. Kyodo news service reported yesterday.

JOC director

TOKYO, June 17. (UPI) Billionaire Yoshiaki Tsutsumi, who has retired as head of the Japan Olympic Committee, will continue to serve as a director of the committee until his term ends next March, committee officials have said.

RESULTS of the Hubara Bridge Club game played on Saturday:

N/S

1. Dr Rida & Dr Naim

2. Nabil Akel & Dr Oskay

3. Jamila Akel & Camille Akel

E/W

1. Sapre & Gajjar

2. Desmond Pereira & A. D'Souza

3. Roolivis brothers

Results of "Kuwait Bridge Committee" marathon game held on Friday:

(sponsored by Tanagra)

1. Sherin & Hendel

2. Farah & Tiab

4. Latala & Reddy

5. D'Souza & Pereira

1st mixed pair Mrs Bianca & Tawil

Olympic champion sets sights on records

NORWALK, California, June 17. (Reuter) Jackie Joyner-Kersey has big plans for 1990.

The double Olympic champion has her sights on the women's long jump world record in Europe this summer after topping her own heptathlon world record in the Goodwill Games in Seattle next month.

"I'll prepare myself to jump 7.30 metres consistently I think 7.53 to 7.55 will come," said Joyner-Kersey, who hopes to compete against Europe's best in Brussels, Zurich, Berlin and Cologne in August.

The world record in the women's long jump is 7.52 metres by the Soviet Union's Galina Chistyakova. Joyner-Kersey's best — 7.45 metres — is the US record.

She won the women's long jump at the US National Athletics championships yesterday with a leap of 7.08 metres into a strong head wind.

Joyner-Kersey, who won gold medals in the heptathlon and women's long jump at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, called "realistic" her chance of breaking her heptathlon world record of 7,291 points at the Goodwill Games.

"I think she can score 7,299 or 7,312 points," said her husband and coach, Bob Kersee.

"I also look for her to regain the world record in the long jump," Kersee predicted. "If not this year, in the future."

"We're going to chase world records until it's time to retire and start working on a couple of Bob Kersees or Jackie Joyner-Kersees."

Britain lose

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, June 17. (Reuter) Britain's Rugby League team suffered their second consecutive defeat today going down 24-13 to Auckland in a tough, uncompromising game.

National champions Auckland, who beat Australia last year and Britain the year before, went into the game as favourites.

The first half was a gritty affair with several punch-ups and dubious refereeing decisions, culminating in the snubbing of Auckland's Stu Galbraith just before halftime when the scores were pegged at 12-all.

Johnson runs fast 200m

NORWALK, California, June 17. (Reuter) A healthy Michael Johnson finally ran as fast as he knew he could last night, blazing to the quickest 200 metres in two years, 19.90 seconds at the US National Championships.

Only six men have ever run faster than the Baylor University senior, whose past two seasons were curtailed by late-spring injuries.

"I felt like I've always been capable of that," a delighted Johnson declared after his wire-to-wire victory. "I just needed a season with no injuries."

Johnson had clocked a wind-assisted 19.91 seconds in the final of the southwest conference meeting last month but had finished a badly beaten second when Leroy Burrell ran an amazing 19.61 seconds — the fastest 200 metres under any conditions.

This time there was no Burrell — or anyone who could catch Johnson.

The 22-year-old speedster ran an outstanding curve and surged to a two-metre lead heading into the straight.

Only Olympic 400-metre bronze medalist Danny Everett challenged on the straight, but he couldn't narrow the margin as Johnson ran strongly.

"I felt like I ran the curve real well, but in past races I've had trouble focusing on the finish line," said Johnson, whose previous best was 20.07 seconds in 1988. "Today I felt real smooth going down the straight, and I think that was the key."

He was honoured, he said, to become one of history's 10 fastest 200 runners, "but I think I am capable of running much better than 19.90."

Everett finished second in a lifetime best of 20.08 seconds, two metres behind Johnson, who had demonstrated his fitness by clocking a world-leading 20.16 seconds in his semifinal two hours earlier.

Burrell passed up the sprints for the long jump, but finished only fourth.

Olympic silver medalist Mike Powell won that event with a leap of 8.24 metres to equal the world's best this year.

World heptathlon record-holder Jackie Joyner-Kersey was equally impressive in the women's long jump as she sailed 7.08 metres into a head wind of 2.6 metres per second (5.81 miles per hour).

Olympic champion Steve Lewis claimed the men's 400-metre in 44.75 seconds, his fastest time of the year, as he continued to bounce back from hamstring problems, and

World Cup Notebook

Prostitutes upset

CAGLIARI, June 17, (Reuters): Massive security to guard against World Cup violence in Cagliari has upset not just the English fans — prostitutes say it is ruining their business. They claim the 4,000 police patrolling Cagliari prevent violence by English hooligans have made it impossible for them to pick up customers in the streets.

Thorn doubtful

GENOA, June 17, (Reuters): Sweden's midfield general Jonas Thörn said today he was doubtful for Wednesday's crucial World Cup match against Costa Rica because of a back injury and could be out of action for some time. "The way I feel now I couldn't possibly play against Costa Rica on Wednesday," the 23-year-old Benfica player said.

False drains

NAPLES, June 17, (Reuters): Naples city council has launched an investigation into claims that false drains leading nowhere were installed around the soccer stadium to beat the rush to finish in time for the World Cup.

Painted devils

VERONA, June 17, (Reuters): Painted devils appeared in the sunlit streets of Verona this afternoon, but without evil intent. Some 10,000 Belgian soccer fans — many dressed as devils with their faces painted black, yellow and red — swarmed into the ancient city for today's World Cup match between Uruguay and Belgium, nicknamed "The Red Devils."

Argentine 'keeper

NAPLES, June 17, (Reuters): Diego Maradona and his team-mates visited injured Argentine goalkeeper Nery Pumpido in a Naples clinic today. Pumpido, who broke his right leg in the World Cup win over the Soviet Union on Wednesday, is expected to leave the clinic on Monday, doctors said.

Popescu injured

BARI, June 17, (Reuters): Romanian defender Gheorghe Popescu injured a leg in training but is expected to play against Argentina in a decisive World Cup Group B match tomorrow.

Cup coach

BOLOGNA, June 17, (Reuters): Colombian World Cup coach Francisco Matute scored a hat-trick in a friendly against local youngsters yesterday.

Beckenbauer sure

ERBA, Italy, June 17, (AP): West Germany's opponent in the second round of the World Cup remains uncertain, but manager Franz Beckenbauer has no doubts about the quality of his team. "We can beat any opponent if we play the way we have played so far," Beckenbauer said today. "I am not overly worried about which team we have to face."

Roth critical

RUEKA, Yugoslavia, June 17, (Reuters): West Germany Reinhold Roth was in a critical condition today after crashing in the Yugoslav 250cc motorcycle Grand Prix.

Roth fractured his skull in a crash involving three riders four laps from the finish on a track made slippery by rain.

The accident came at a fast left-hand bend opposite the pits as the leading pack of seven were lapping Australian Darren Milner.

Roth and Milner collided and Spanish world champion Alex Criville, close behind, was on top of them as all three crashed to the track.

They were taken to hospital where doctors said Roth was in a critical condition. The conditions of Milner and Criville were not immediately known.

Organisers stopped the race and declared the results official at the end of the 23rd lap.

Brazil face open revolt after disappointing display

TURIN, June 17, (Reuters): Brazilian manager Sebastiao Lazaroni faced open revolt from some of his star players today after his side's disappointing 1-0 World Cup win over Costa Rica.

"I was only given five minutes to play, what can I possibly show in such a short time?" complained late substitute Bebeto, a favourite with fans for his old-style Brazilian attacking play.

"I must be given a decent chance to

show that I can help the team score some goals," he said.

But the fragile Vasco striker has struggled to find a permanent spot in the two-man attack favoured by Lazaroni, who again defended his cautious 3-5-2 lineup.

"I am not going to change my tactical scheme just because of the Costa Rica match which we should have won by far more goals," he said.

"Putting on another forward would not have made any difference against such a defensive team, and in fact I thought we played much better this time than against Sweden because of the number of chances we created," Lazaroni said.

Romario, who was not even included as a substitute, disagreed.

"How can we hope to win the cup by playing this kind of football?" the PSV

Eindhoven striker said.

"We need more players up front to help convert the chances we make into goals," said Romario, who insisted he had completely recovered from a recent broken leg.

Brazil outplayed the Costa Ricans yesterday but were thwarted almost throughout by a mixture of poor finishing and brilliant goalkeeping by Luis Gabeiro Conejo.

Egypt hold Ireland to draw

Group F stalemate extended



Hossam Hassan of Egypt (left) and Ireland's Kevin Moran battle for the ball. (Reuters wirephoto)

PALERMO, June 17, (Reuters): Egypt soaked up an Irish onslaught today to claim a 0-0 draw and leave the four teams in Group F stalemated on two points with identical goal difference.

Ireland set out to deny the Egyptians the space they enjoyed in Tuesday's 1-1 draw with the Dutch European champions and dominated the game for the start with their hard-running style.

But the quality of their crossing was seldom good enough to trouble an Egyptian defence in which Hani Ramzi and goalkeeper Ahmed Shubair excelled.

The closest Ireland came to scoring was when Kevin Sheedy sent midfielder Ray Houghton clear on 69 minutes but Shubair sprinted off his line to make a superb smothering save.

Six minutes later left back Steve Staunton rifled a tremendous low shot from 25 metres just the wrong side of Shubair's far post as the Irish continued to pour forward.

The result leaves everything resting on the last two matches when Ireland play the Dutch here and Egypt travel to meet England in Sardinia.

Little was seen of the Egyptians, appearing in their first finals since 1934, as an attacking force with the pacy Hossam Hassan

Standings

Standings in World Cup first-round play after today's matches (tabulate under matches played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F
Czechoslovakia 2 2 0 0 6 1 4	Italy 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Argentina 2 2 0 0 3 1 4	West Germany 2 2 0 0 9 2 4	Belgium 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Uruguay 2 2 0 0 2 0 4
Yugoslavia 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	United States 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Romania 2 2 0 0 3 2 2	Colombia 2 2 0 0 1 2 2	Spain 2 2 0 0 1 0 2	South Korea 2 2 0 0 1 0 2
Austria 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Cameroon 2 2 0 0 3 1 4	Sweden 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Yugoslavia 2 2 0 0 1 2 2	France 2 2 0 0 1 0 2	England 2 2 0 0 1 1 2
United States 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Argentina 2 2 0 0 3 2 2	Costa Rica 2 2 0 0 1 1 2	Belgium 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Spain 2 2 0 0 1 0 2	Ireland 2 2 0 0 1 1 2
Cameroon 2 2 0 0 3 1 4	Romania 2 2 0 0 3 2 2	Sweden 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	Uruguay 2 2 0 0 2 0 4	France 2 2 0 0 1 0 2	Netherlands 2 2 0 0 1 1 2
Argentina 2 2 0 0 3 2 2	Sweden 2 2 0 0 2 0 4		England 2 2 0 0 1 1 2		Egypt 2 2 0 0 1 1 2
Soviet Union 2 2 0 0 2 0 4			Ireland 2 2 0 0 1 1 2		
Group C					
Brazil 2 2 0 0 3 1 4					
Scotland 2 2 0 0 1 2 2					
Costa Rica 2 2 0 0 1 1 2					
Sweden 2 2 0 0 2 0 4					

NOTE: Results of Belgium vs Uruguay and S. Korea vs Spain not included. Today's games: (1) Argentina vs Romania; (2) Cameroon vs Soviet Union. Both matches at 10.00 pm (Kuwait time). The first match will be shown live.

given little support.

Ireland dominated from the start as they sought the win which would guarantee them a place in the last 16 in their first ever World Cup final appearance.

Liverpool defender Staunton had a powerful shot turned away for a corner by Ramzi on 24 minutes and seven minutes later Irish penalty claims were turned down after Sheedy fell over Ramzi's leg.

Shubair, a target for several European clubs, showed his class with confident saves from a Chris Morris cross and a Tony Cascarino volley.

Violence sickening: Britain

CAGLIARI, June 17, (Reuters): Britain today described clashes between riot police and stone-throwing English World Cup soccer supporters in Cagliari as sickening and said they were organised by a mindless minority of thugs.

Police used tear gas, batons and rifle butts yesterday to disperse 2,000 chanting England fans marching to Cagliari stadium after hooligans at the head of the column charged a police cordon, pelting riot squads with rocks and bricks.

Seven fans, one with a broken leg, and five police were hurt. Police arrested seven English supporters and cornered 500 to 600 fans in a backstreet petrol station before allowing those with tickets to continue to the match against the Netherlands.

"The orchestrated incident before the match was a sickening reflection that a mindless minority of thugs can bring English football into international disrepute," British Sports Minister Colin Moynihan said.

"I am grateful to the police for their swift, tough and decisive action," he said.

Deputy police Chief Antonio Pista, who ran yesterday's operation, told Reuters: "These are hooligans. They either had to accept being kept under control or face a clash with us. These people have learned that they can't engage in gratuitous hooliganism."

In Genoa, European Football Union (UEFA) president Lennart Johansson said that the incidents had further reduced the chances of English soccer clubs being readmitted to European competition.

Moynihan, who flew to Cagliari to watch the goalless draw, said police had prevented further incidents and avoided serious clashes between English and Dutch supporters.

Police mounted the World Cup's biggest security operation for yesterday match because of the violent reputation of both English and Dutch fans.

Lendl thrashes Becker

LONDON, June 17, (Reuters): Ivan Lendl won a battle of thundering services and gave his Wimbledon hopes a tremendous boost today by crushing Boris Becker 6-3 6-2 to retain the London grass court tennis title.

The big Czechoslovak dropped the first seven points of the match but still won the second game after surviving six break points. He broke the Wimbledon titleholder in the third game and from then on never looked back.

Lendl, who has won seven Grand Slam titles but never Wimbledon, has set his heart on rectifying that omission this year. On today's performance he will now be the favourite.

Until this match, the 22-year-old West German,

Becker, who has won three Wimbledon titles, had been regarded as the world's foremost grass court player.

But on today's performance he has now been superseded by Lendl, who also received a huge psychological boost if they do clash again in the Wimbledon final in three weeks.

"I'm very happy with the way I played and I just hope I can keep it up for the next three weeks," Lendl said.

"Once I held serve for 1-1 and broke him, I felt great. It's nice to know that all hard work I've done the last two months paid off."

Lendl produced 12 aces in the match, six more than Becker, and his victory took just 74 minutes.

Rainey wins Grand Prix

RUEKA, Yugoslavia, June 17, (Reuters): Wayne Rainey won the Yugoslav 500cc motorcycle Grand Prix today by a comfortable margin over world championship rival Kevin Schwantz who failed to overcome a poor start.

Rainey, in pole position, led from start to finish on his Yamaha for a 10-second victory while fellow-American Schwantz got away badly from second spot on the grid to be seventh at the end of the first lap.

Schwantz, who had closed the gap on Rainey at the top of the championship standings with victories in the previous two races in West Germany and Austria, rode an aggressive race.

But by the time he had guided his Suzuki into second spot on the fourth lap Rainey had already built a 5.3-second cushion.

Briton Niall MacKenzie on a Suzuki finished third, 33 seconds behind Rainey, to move into fourth place in the standings.

The Cagiva works team had a bad day with all three riders crashing out of the race. American Randy Mamola collided with British team-mate Ron Haslam on the first bend and Brazilian Alexandre Barros went out on the third lap. The riders were not injured.

In the 250cc race, 1988 and 1989 Spanish world champion Alfonso Pons skidded off the track on the 15th lap and Pierfrancesco Chili of Italy crashed trying to avoid colliding with him.



Allen wins

Mark Allen of the United States won the 9th International Triathlon in Nice yesterday. (Reuters wirephoto)

Jaguar take top two places in Le Mans

LE MANS, France, June 17, (Reuters): Dane John Nielsen, driving a Jaguar, gave the British manufacturer their seventh win in the Le Mans 24-hour sports car event today.

A last-minute engine failure for Spaniard Jesus Pareja, in a Porsche, handed Dutchman Jan Lammers second place and an unexpected one-two for Jaguar.

Fifteen minutes before the 24-hour mark, after a dramatic eight-hour chase, Pareja was trailing Nielsen's Jaguar by one lap. Nielsen had taken the lead overnight, 12 hours into the race.

But suddenly cheers erupted from British supporters in the crowd as smoke started pouring from the Porsche, which even-

tually came to a standstill at the end of the mulsanne straight.

A disappointed Pareja, who was partnered by Argentine Oscar Larrauri and Swiss Walter Brun, walked dejectedly back to the pits while the two leading Jaguars motored on to victory.

Nielsen was partnered by Britain's Martin Brundle and

American Price Cobb. Lammers, who finished four laps behind him, had been teamed with Briton Andy Wallace and West Germany's Franz Konrad.

Another Porsche, driven by the British trio of Tiff Needell, David Sears and Anthony Reid, took third place, seven laps behind the winners.



A Porsche 962C, driven by the team of Pareja/Larrauri Brun lead the Le Mans just one hour after the start of the race yesterday. This team went outwards the end. (Reuters wirephoto)



The winners with KIH officials.

KIH tourney ends

WHEN the last ball was struck, each competitor knew they had accomplished a great deal at the KIH Junior Open. Not only did these players battle 50°C heat all week, but they had fun doing it! The following are the final results from the Kuwait International Hotel 1990 Junior Open sponsored by Pepsi-Cola:

Boys U-16 doubles final: Abdullah Al Aziz & Khalid Al Ashwak defeated Urosh Lukic & Andrea Negri 7/5 6/4.

Boys U-16 doubles 3rd place: Bader Al Bader & Khalid Al Qatamei defeated Vijaya Bala & Samer Abu Wahab 6/2 6/4.

Boys U-16 doubles consolation final: Peter Panji & Simon Evelyn upended Fathi Al Sabri & Abdullah Al Masri 6/4 6/0.

Girls U-16 singles final: Hala Al Masry cruised by Zain Al Sabah 6/0 6/2; Amara Labib earned third place by walkover.

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